



**13<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**  
*14 – 17 March 2016, Israel*

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**AEWA's CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: FORMAT AND FUTURE PRIORITIES**

*Prepared by David Stroud (UK observer to the Technical Committee)*

**Summary**

1. Through 2015, a review of the use of AEWA's Conservation Guidelines was undertaken at the request of MOP5.
2. MOP6 has asked the TC to consider the results of this survey and make recommendations inter-sessionally to the Standing Committee on both the style and subject matter of future Guidelines.
3. There was an excellent response rate covering a very large number of countries. Respondents reflected a range of potential AEWA target audiences and can probably be considered as a balanced and representative sample (although of course this is unknowable).
4. Annex 2 presents a simple summary of all responses. Time has not permitted a more sophisticated analysis by subsets of respondents, such as by job type or region, but this would be both possible and useful.
5. Although about a third of respondents (36%) used AEWA Conservation Guidelines regularly (at least once a year), over half (56%) used them either only occasionally or never. [Also of relevance are National Reports to MOP which indicate a low degree of reported use of Conservation Guidelines]. Accordingly, there is scope to significantly improve the use of Conservation Guidelines.
6. Greatest preference was for short detailed briefing notes together with more detailed topic reviews: an indication of need to have multiple styles of advice products (as recognised by the Ramsar Convention with respect to STRP outputs<sup>1</sup>). Clearly least preferred was broad Guidance covering multiple issues.
7. Section 5 presents some possible overall conclusions for discussion by the Committee.

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/final\\_report\\_and\\_components\\_ramsar\\_scientific\\_technical\\_advice.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/final_report_and_components_ramsar_scientific_technical_advice.pdf)

## 1. Background

At the time of drafting the Agreement, the Conservation Guidelines (originally drafted as a single document by Wetlands International) were seen as significant guidance for the Parties: “Noting that these ... provide a common framework for action but have no legally binding effect.”<sup>2</sup>

The purpose of the Guidelines is “...to assist the Parties in the implementation of this Action Plan.”<sup>3</sup>

The Agreement’s Action Plan provides for guidance on eight issues (Guidelines nos. 1-8). Guidance on a further six subject areas has been since prepared (Table 1).

Since the drafting of the Action Plan there have been a number of relevant developments:

- The development of the internet as a means of dissemination of information, which in much, but by no means all of the Agreement area, has revolutionised access to information via web-sites.
- The progressive development of relevant advice and guidance by other MEAs and international bodies – including CBD (and its SBSTTA), the Ramsar Convention (and its STRP), the EU (with respect to the application of the Birds and Habitats Directives) and IUCN.

Drafting of the Conservation Guidelines is a major task for the TC and until recently, it was far from clear who actually used them, whether they adequately fulfilled needs and indeed what those information needs actually were.

A linked issue was that the existing guidance has been developed from the perspective of ‘what waterbird conservationists think others need to know about waterbird conservation’, rather than any analytical approach which asks other sectors (whose activities may impact on waterbirds) what information they need (i.e. an analysis of user-needs).

Most Parties – the core audience for the Guidelines – report that they do not use the current guidelines as shown by the analysis of the National Reports to MOP5 (below), whilst informal discussions with many waterbird conservationists show little or no awareness of these documents by other ‘stakeholders’:

### “Use of the AEWA Conservation Guidelines

“The average proportion of respondents reporting use of the AEWA Conservation Guidelines was 35% (24% of the 62 Contracting Parties), with the greatest number of Parties using the *Guidelines for a waterbird monitoring protocol* and the smallest number using the *Guidelines for identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds*.

The principal reason provided by Parties for not using the Guidelines was that alternative guidelines were used; it was often stated that there was considerable overlap between these and the AEWA Guidelines.”<sup>4</sup>

Accordingly, Resolution 5.10<sup>5</sup> on *Revision and adoption of Conservation Guidelines*, made two requests of the Technical Committee:

7. *Requests* the Technical Committee, as a matter of priority and in the first part of the next triennium, to undertake a critical review of the style and format of AEWA’s Conservation Guidelines, *inter alia* considering the following existing issues:
  - 7.1 the merits or otherwise of shorter information notes that might be easier to translate into local languages;
  - 7.2 the need to target different styles or types of guidance to different audiences (e.g. government policy makers, wetland managers, other relevant stakeholders or user groups);

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<sup>2</sup> Resolution 2.3.

<sup>3</sup> Para 7.3. of the AEWA Action Plan.

<sup>4</sup> Analysis of AEWA National Reports for the Triennium 2009-2011. [http://old.unep-awa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5\\_docs/pdf/mop5\\_12\\_analysis\\_nr\\_2009-2011.pdf](http://old.unep-awa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5_docs/pdf/mop5_12_analysis_nr_2009-2011.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [http://old.unep-awa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5\\_docs/final\\_res\\_pdf/res\\_5\\_10\\_adoption\\_cg.pdf](http://old.unep-awa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5_docs/final_res_pdf/res_5_10_adoption_cg.pdf)

- 7.3 the merits or otherwise of regionally specific guidance;
  - 7.4 knowledge of the extent of use of the existing guidelines and implications for the dissemination of guidance; and
  - 7.5 the potential value of a ‘guidance to guidance’ format as has been developed by the Ramsar Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel.
8. *Further requests* the Technical Committee to make recommendations to the Standing Committee on the basis of the review described in paragraph 7 above, prior to developing further guidance in the current format for consideration by the Sixth Meeting of the Parties;

MOP6 carried this task forward (Resolution 6.5), and asked this meeting of the TC to consider the findings of the survey and make recommendations to the next meeting of the Standing Committee.

- “4. *Requests* the Technical Committee, as a matter of priority to:
- Complete its review of the style and format of AEWA Conservation Guidelines as outlined by Resolution 5.10;
  - Make inter-sessional recommendations regarding any proposed changes to the Standing Committee; and
  - Following the Standing Committee’s approval and resources permitting, put in place a rolling programme to revise and update existing guidelines, as necessary, and developing any new guidelines according to new formats as agreed.”

Overall, the task can be summarised as three linked issues:

- a. **How** (in what format and by what means) should AEWA provide technical guidance on waterbird conservation issues?
- b. On **which subjects** should this advice be provided?
- c. **How often** should guidance be updated?

## 2. Existing guidelines

Table 1 presents a summary of existing AEWA Conservation Guidelines and their status (whether or not these have been revised since their initial adoption).

Table 1. Summary of existing Conservation Guidelines.

No.	Conservation Guideline	When adopted	Last updated
1	Guidelines on the preparation of National Single Species Action Plans for migratory waterbirds	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)
2	Guidelines on identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 5 (2012)
3	Guidelines on the preparation of site inventories for migratory waterbirds	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)
4	Guidelines on the management of key sites for migratory waterbird.	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)
5	Guidelines on sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 6 (2015)
6	Guidelines on regulating trade in migratory waterbirds	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 5 (2012)
7	Guidelines on the development of ecotourism at wetlands	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)
8	Guidelines on reducing crop damage, damage to fisheries, bird strikes and other forms of conflict between waterbirds and human activities	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)

No.	Conservation Guideline	When adopted	Last updated
9	Guidelines for a waterbird monitoring protocol	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 3 (2005)
10	Guidelines on avoidance of introductions of non-native waterbird species	MOP 2 (2002)	MOP 5 (2012)
11	Guidelines on how to avoid, minimize or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds	MOP 4 (2008)	
12	Guidelines on measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change	MOP 4 (2008)	
13	Guidelines on the translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes: Complementing the IUCN Guidelines	MOP 5 (2012)	
14	Guidelines on how to avoid or mitigate impact of electricity power grids on migratory birds in the African-Eurasian region	MOP 5 (2012)	
15	Guidelines on national legislation for the protection of species of migratory waterbirds and their habitats	MOP 6 (2015)	
16	Renewable energy technologies and migratory species: guidelines for sustainable deployment	MOP 6 (2015)	

### 3. Update of existing guidelines

Updating guidance has to balance the resources (time by Technical Committee and/or cost to engage contractors) to undertake this task against the risk of having adopted guidance that is no longer ‘fit for purpose’. TC 12 agreed that existing Guidelines should be updated as follows:

1. **At any time**, where it is known an adopted Conservation Guideline clearly no longer reflects international ‘best practice’ (for example if relevant IUCN guidance on the subject has changed), then it should be amended at the first possible instance to ensure AEWA’s guidance represents ‘best’ international practice – both legally and technically<sup>6</sup>.
2. **All** guidance should be subject to review every three cycles<sup>7</sup> (nine years) with a view to update/amendment if this is deemed necessary. Note that review does not necessarily imply amendment – it is just a process to assess whether there is any need for amendment or update so AEWA’s guidance represents ‘best’ international practice.

Dates of last review of Conservation Guidelines are as follows:

Date last reviewed?	Conservation Guidelines
2005	1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9
2008	11, 12
2012	2, 6, 10, 13, 14
2015	5, 15, 16

The first tranche of AEWA Guidelines (nos. 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 9) are thus already overdue for review. Such activity needs thus to occur during 2016-2017, such that any amendments could be considered by MOP7 in 2018.

<sup>6</sup> This also follows from the requirement of para 7.3. of the Action Plan that “The Agreement secretariat shall ensure, where possible, coherence with guidelines approved under other international instruments.”

<sup>7</sup> The logic for three cycles is the balance between too frequent need for activity and the risk that much longer periods are likely to result in Guidelines becoming significantly dated.

#### **4. How should AEWA provide technical guidance?**

The Parties at MOP 5 posed a number of questions in Resolution 5.10 (above). To inform the TC's response to these questions, a simple on-line questionnaire (in both English and French) was developed at TC 12 (Annex 1) and the survey run from June to December 2015.

It was circulated on several occasions to a number of waterbird networks, including to members of the Goose, Swan, Duck and Threatened Waterbird Specialist Groups (May and June); a meeting of governmental representatives in Denmark (October); and to participants at MOP6 (November).

The detailed results are given in Annex 2 and summarised below.

#### ***Summary results from the questionnaire***

The questionnaire was designed to address a number of issues. What follows is a simple summary of the data – more sophisticated analysis would be possible (responses for particular regions, or type of respondent). Time has not permitted this for TC13.

#### **Respondents**

##### **Question 1**

- There were a total of 154 responses from 60 countries, 122 to the English and 34 to the French questionnaire.
- There was very limited response at MOP6 despite repeatedly advertising the survey (just seven responses from 207 participants – 3%). However, when 143 non-responding MOP6 participants were contacted with a personalised email in December, this generated 65 responses (45%). These responses significantly added to the overall sample of respondents.
- There was a good level of response from AEWA National Administrative and Technical Focal Points; the Technical Committee members and observers; AEWA National Administrative Focal Points; and other MOP participants. Over half (55%) of respondents indicated that they worked internationally.
- About half of respondents (49%) were involved with some aspect of waterbird monitoring. Many were advisors to governments (39%) or academic researchers (38%). Fewest (8%) were involved with invasive species control which may be a reason why invasive species issues was seen as a low priority (and use of AEWA's invasives guidelines was very low – see below).

#### **Conclusions**

- a) There was an excellent response rate covering a very large number of countries.
- b) Very significantly the greatest overall response was from personalised emails to possible respondents.
- c) Respondents reflect a range of potential AEWA target audiences and can probably be considered as a balanced and representative sample (although of course this is unknowable).

#### **Where and how respondents seek information**

##### **Questions 2 & 3**

- Most respondents used on-line searching of scientific journals and organisational websites to obtain the information they needed for their work (Question 2), although reference books (presumably in hard copy) were significantly used (64%).
- The tables under Questions 2 & 3 in Annex 2 list the main source of information currently used. Of significance are:
  - The role of personal networks and colleagues as a source of information.
  - The broad range of sources used. Any individual typically (and not unexpected) uses multiple sources of information.

- AEWA partner organisations (especially BirdLife International, Wetlands International and IUCN) are key sources of information, as is the Ramsar Convention, although less so CMS probably reflecting the less developed range of guidance and information there.

## Conclusions

- d) AEWA is just one of multiple sources of guidance on waterbird conservation.

## Current use of AEWA Conservation Guidelines

### Question 4

- Although about a third of respondents (36%) used AEWA Conservation Guidelines regularly (at least once a year), over half (56%) used them either only occasionally or never. [Also of relevance are National Reports to MOP which indicate a low degree of reported use of Conservation Guidelines].
- Most frequently used Guidelines related to Action Plans, monitoring and harvest. Least referred to related to translocation, non-natives and emergency situations. This is similar to relative use as reported by Parties through National Reports (see section 1 above).

## Conclusions

- e) There is scope to significantly improve the use of Conservation Guidelines.

## Style and format of AEWA Conservation Guidelines

### Question 5: style and format

- In terms of content, participants expressed the following preferences (from most to least preferred):
  1. Short briefing notes containing key points with guidance on further sources of more detailed information
  2. More detailed, in-depth reviews of issues
  3. Case studies
  4. Guidance with more regional content (e.g. relevant to just some parts of the Agreement area)
  5. Guidance on decision-making processes and procedures (i.e. more policy-related content)
  6. Less detailed reviews, but summary syntheses of key areas
  7. Specific content – covering a single issue (possibly in more detail)<sup>8</sup>
  8. Broad content – covering many related issues (possibly in less detail)

### Question 5a: languages

- Greatest preference was expressed for Russian language guidance, followed by Arabic, Spanish, Swahili and Portuguese. No other languages were suggested.

## Conclusions

- f) The preference for short detailed briefing notes, but also more detailed topic reviews might be seen as contradictory, but can also be seen as a desire to have multiple styles of advice products (as recognised by the Ramsar Convention with respect to STRP outputs<sup>9</sup>). Clearly least preferred was broad Guidance covering multiple issues.

<sup>8</sup> Comment: synthèse des connaissances sur un sujet donné, mais actualisée régulièrement (au moins annuellement) c'est-à-dire un document de référence "vivant".

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/final\\_report\\_and\\_components\\_ramsar\\_scientific\\_technical\\_advice.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/final_report_and_components_ramsar_scientific_technical_advice.pdf)

## Which subjects should AEWA provide technical guidance on?

### Question 6.

Recalling that the purpose of the Guidelines is “...to assist the Parties in the implementation of this Action Plan”, Annex 2 summarises the main subject areas of the Action Plan and relates these issues to existing Guidelines. Existing Conservation Guidelines broadly cover most Action Plan subject areas (as would be expected).

- Highest preference was expressed for i) Guidelines related to reducing conflicts with human interests; ii) management of land-use changes; and iii) management of disturbance. (A ‘field guide’ to managing disturbance has already been planned by the TC and awaits funding as a joint project with Ramsar STRP). Lowest levels of preference were expressed for guidance related to management of protected areas and control of invasive species – both issues where there is extensive existing guidance available.
- The TC12 recognised the following issues – which as issues are typically recent additions to the Action Plan – currently have no (or limited) relevant guidance. Of these, considerable guidance related to CEPA and (probably?) habitat restoration has been prepared by others<sup>10</sup>.
  - Issues related to regulation and management of disturbance
  - Rehabilitation and/or restoration of habitats
  - Elimination of bycatch from fisheries
  - Management of threats from aquaculture
  - Eliminating lead fishing weights
  - Communication, participation and public awareness (CEPA)
- Of the requests for further guidance, some include topics such as conflict resolution, waterbird monitoring and site management, for which AEWA already has Guidelines. This suggests that AEWA’s own guidance is not as well known as it could be with at least some of its target audience.
- Many of the other requests relate to issues where existing guidance readily exists from Ramsar, IUCN, CBD or other sources.
- Some other requests relate to issues where new guidance might usefully be prepared jointly with Ramsar and/or CMS (e.g. climate change adaptation measures for wetlands; addressing illegal trade, taking and killing; mainstreaming nature conservation policies within government).
- Additionally, MOP6 requested guidance (funding permitting) on Reducing the impact of fisheries:
  - Compile existing – and where necessary compliment – conservation guidelines and recommendations based on the priorities identified in paragraph 5 of Resolution 6.9 and best available science and bring these to MOP7. (Resolution 6.9)

## 5. Possible overall conclusions for discussion

- A. Any new guidance drafted (and updates of existing guidance), should consist of two elements:
1. A simple briefing note of maximum two pages length. This should aim to summarise the issue; present key needs or messages; and point to further relevant sources of guidance. This would facilitate translation of such briefings into a range of other languages at low cost.
  2. More detailed conservation guidance documents. These should be constrained in length to a maximum length of [c.25] pages. Any further background information should be presented or published in separate format (and linked).

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<sup>10</sup> e.g. Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA). A Toolkit for National Focal Points and NBSAP Coordinators. IUCN. <https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/documents/2007-059.pdf>

- There would be merit in reviewing the style and format of existing Conservation Guidance documents.
  - As much as possible, emphasis should be placed on presenting AEWA guidance as a 'guide to guidance' – i.e. providing a synthesis of the multiple sources of information already available.
- B. AEWA should aim to routinely translate briefing notes into Russian and Arabic resources permitting.
- C. There is little merit in AEWA producing guidance on where this has been produced by other MEAs. Accordingly, there would be merit in preparing a high level guide to sources of guidance, indexed by subject matter. This should cover key guidance documents prepared by AEWA, Ramsar<sup>11</sup>, CMS and IUCN in the first instance, but in principle could/should include any source of relevance to AEWA Parties needs.
- D. TC should develop a prioritised task list related to future work on Guidelines. To commence discussion this might be as follows:
1. Develop index guide to existing MEA guidelines and handbooks relevant to AEWA's mission. (This would deliver MOP6's request to summarise relevant fisheries guidance).
  2. Produce the 'field guide' to managing disturbance as already planned by TC. (This would capitalise on existing work and could be disseminated jointly by Ramsar).
  3. Produce Guideline on reducing conflicts with human interests in new format. (This can be seen as a full revision of existing Guideline 8 which was overdue for review).
  4. Review and update the following Guidelines in line with the rolling schedule agreed by TC:
    - #1 – Single Species Action Plans
    - #3 – Site inventories
    - #4 – Site management
    - #7 – Ecotourism at wetlands
    - #9 – Waterbird monitoring

At least these revisions should generate a briefing note according to the new format, even if there are no textual changes to the existing guidelines.

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<sup>11</sup> Ramsar used to maintain a library of useful third-party resources [http://ramsar.rgis.ch/cda/en/ramsar-documents-wurl/main/ramsar/1-31-116\\_4000\\_0](http://ramsar.rgis.ch/cda/en/ramsar-documents-wurl/main/ramsar/1-31-116_4000_0) but its current dysfunctional web-site seems no longer to make this information readily available.



## **Annex 1. Structure of 2015 questionnaire survey of use of AEWA's Conservation Guidelines and future options**

### **Your input needed on further developing guidance for migratory waterbird conservation**

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) is an international treaty which promotes the conservation of migratory waterbirds (<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/legalinstrument/aewa>).

Formal Conservation Guidelines have been adopted by the Parties on different aspects of the implementation of the Agreement (<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/publications/technical-publications>).

AEWA's Parties have requested a review as to how the Agreement delivers its guidance.

We would welcome assistance with this task, and would be grateful if you could spare a few minutes to provide us with some simple feedback which will help us through completing this questionnaire.

An English version is available at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/...>

We would be especially grateful if you could forward this request to colleagues or others who you feel might be able to contribute.

If you would like to further assist with the future development of AEWA's guidance, the final page below gives an opportunity to provide us with your contact details.

Thank you for your time!

AEWA's Technical Committee

## BRIEF QUESTIONNAIRE ON FURTHER DEVELOPING GUIDANCE FOR MIGRATORY WATERBIRD CONSERVATION

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### 1. About your background and work

Name:

Organisation:

Position/job title:

Country

If you work internationally please tick here

#### Your role within AEWA

AEWA National Administrative Focal Point

AEWA National Technical Focal Point

AEWA National CEPA Focal Point

Technical Committee member

Representative of an observer organisation

Other participant at Meetings of Parties

Other (please specify)

**What does your work involve? Please tick up to four of the following categories that apply to your work (i.e. those issues that involve at least 25% of your time):**

Land manager or protected area warden or ranger *etc.*

Advisor to national government or its institutes

Advisor to international organisations (including other MEAs)

Government or (national) policy maker

Academic or researcher

Waterbird monitoring

Threatened species recovery

Invasive species control

Management or resolution of conflicts between humans & wildlife

Planning, development control, Environmental Impact Assessment *etc.*

Communication and public awareness

Conservation training

Policy advice for Non-governmental organisation (*e.g.* BirdLife Partner)

Other (please specify)

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### 2. Where do you *currently* get the information and guidance that you use in your job? Please tick all of the following categories that apply:

Searching the internet

Books

Scientific journals (including online)

Word of mouth/colleagues

Formal guidance from MEAs (including Ramsar, CMS, AEWA *etc.*)

Guidance from other organisations (please specify)

Social media (*e.g.* Facebook or Twitter)

Other (please specify)

**What *level* of technical advice or guidance (*i.e.* how much detail) do you currently need to do your job? Please tick all of the following categories that apply:**

Detailed, in-depth technical knowledge (*e.g.* as provided by scientific research papers)

Summarised knowledge (*e.g.* as provided by a general review of a subject area)

- High-level summary information (*e.g.* as provided by a short briefing note)
- A combination of the above
- Other (please specify)

**3. Have you previously used guidance from any source for the conservation and/or management of waterbirds and/or their habitats?**

- Yes       No

**3a. If so, which sources have you used?**

**3b. Are there particularly good examples of information sources that you would recommend? If so, please could we have details?**

**4. How regularly do you use AEWA’s existing Conservation Guidelines [<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/publications/technical-publications>] to inform your work?**

- Never  
 Occasionally (less than once a year)  
 Regularly (at least once a year)

Which specific Guidelines have you used so far? (text box)

**5. AEWA is currently reviewing the style and format of its Conservation Guidelines. Please indicate how useful you would find the following options in respect of your information needs**

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Somewhat useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	<i>Extremely useful</i>
More detailed, in-depth reviews of issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Less detailed reviews, but summary syntheses of key areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Short briefing notes containing key points with guidance on further sources of more detailed information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance with more regional content ( <i>e.g.</i> relevant to just some parts of the Agreement area)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Guidance on decision making processes and procedures (i.e. more policy related content)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broad content – covering many related issues (possibly in less detail)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific content – covering a single issue (possibly in more detail)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there are other issues related to the delivery of conservation guidance for migratory waterbirds, we would be please to receive these:

**AEWA formally publishes its guidance in French and English. Resources permitting, into which other languages would be most useful for AEWA guidance to be additionally translated. Please rank, where 1 is highest priority:**

- Spanish
- Russian
- Arabic
- Swahili
- Portuguese

Other languages (please specify)

- 
- 
- 
- 

**6. What are your current priority needs for information with respect to the conservation of waterbirds and their habitats?**

*Please rate the following areas indicating to what extent further information/guidance would be useful:*

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Somewhat useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	<i>Extremely useful</i>
Management of land-use changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management of disturbance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reducing conflicts with human interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management of protected areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sustainable hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Control of invasive species	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please indicate below):	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Further comments:

**7. Please indicate below if you would like to be kept informed about further developments including receiving AEWA's [periodic] e-newsletter.**

Please provide your email address if you wish to receive feedback from this survey:

Thank you very much for spending time completing this questionnaire!

*[Working Group 6 members] for AEWA's Technical Committee*

## Annex 2. Results of questionnaire survey of use of AEWA's Conservation Guidelines and future options

### SIMPLE SUMMARY OF ALL RESPONSES

#### 1. About your background and work

Country 154 responses were received from 60 countries:

Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, Belgium (3), Bénin, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Cote D'Ivoire, Croatia, Czech Republic (2), Denmark (4), Egypt, Estonia (3), Ethiopia, Finland (6), France (11), Georgia, Germany (12), Ghana (2), Greece (3), India, Indonesia, Ireland (2), Italy (2), Jersey, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya (2), Lithuania, Luxembourg, Macedonia, Madagascar (2), Mali, Mauritania (2), Morocco (2), Namibia (2), Nigeria, Norway (3), Republique du Congo, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa (4), Spain (3), Sweden (2), Switzerland (2), T'Chad (2), Tanzania (2), The Netherlands (10), Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, UK (21), Ukraine, United Arab Emirates & USA (4)

If you work internationally please tick here 85 (55%) of respondents answered yes

#### 1a. Your role within AEWA

AEWA National Administrative Focal Point	28	(18%)
AEWA National Technical Focal Point	18	(12%)
Technical Committee member	12	(8%)
Member of a species Working Group or Expert Group	45	(29%)
Representative of an observer organisation	26	(17%)
Other participant at Meetings of Parties	20	(13%)
Other (please specify)	30	(19%) = None of above

#### 1b. What does your work involve? Please tick up to four of the following categories that apply to your work (i.e. those issues that involve at least 25% of your time):

##### Responses ranked by response frequency

Waterbird monitoring	76	(49%)
Advisor to national government or its institutes	60	(39%)
Academic or researcher	59	(38%)
Threatened species recovery	51	(33%)
Communication and public awareness	45	(29%)
Management or resolution of conflicts between humans & wildlife	38	(25%)
Conservation training	37	(24%)
Government or (national) policy maker	33	(21%)
Planning, development control, Environmental Impact Assessment etc.	31	(20%)
Policy advice for Non-governmental organisation (e.g. BirdLife Partner)	27	(18%)
Advisor to international organisations (including other MEAs)	22	(14%)
Other (please specify)	20	(13%)
Land manager or protected area warden or ranger etc.	17	(11%)
Invasive species control	12	(8%)

**2. Where do you *currently* get the information and guidance that you use in your job? Please tick all of the following categories that apply:**

Responses ranked by response frequency

Scientific journals (including online)	123	(80%)
Searching the internet	114	(74%)
Formal guidance from MEAs (including Ramsar, CMS, AEWa etc.)	99	(64%)
Books	98	(64%)
Word of mouth/colleagues	92	(62%)
Guidance from other organisations (please specify)	55	(36%)
Social media ( <i>e.g.</i> Facebook or Twitter)	24	(16%)
Other (please specify)	46	(30%)

	Frequency
• National BirdLife partner (Vogelbescherming Nederland, RSPB, NABU, BirdLife South Africa)	14
• Governments and statutory institutes/agencies	11
• BirdLife International (incl. Datazone)	10
• IUCN	9
• Scientific conferences and networks	7
• Wetlands International (WPE online)	6
• National ornithological research institutes (BTO, Animal Demography Unit (University of Cape Town),	4
• European Commission (incl. Commission guidance)	4
• WWF (incl. WWF Mediterranean Office)	3
• Meetings of Parties and associated papers	3
• MedWet (incl. mtgs of Mediterranean Wetlands Committee)	3
• Universities (Universit� of Wageningen)	2
• Ramsar Convention	2
• Email and Electronic Newsletters	2
• Convention on Migratory Species	1
• World Conservation Monitoring Centre	1
• Conservation International	1
• FAO	1
• Consultation of nature/bird/agriculture/forestry NGOs	1
• CSBI, BBOP, TBC, IFC, LUKE (f. RKTL) [NOT SURE WHAT THESE ARE?]	1

**2a. What *level* of technical advice or guidance (*i.e.* how much detail) do you currently need to do your job? Please tick all of the following categories that apply:**

Detailed, in-depth technical knowledge ( <i>e.g.</i> as provided by scientific research papers)	63	(41%)
Summarised knowledge ( <i>e.g.</i> as provided by a general review of a subject area)	56	(36%)
High-level summary information ( <i>e.g.</i> as provided by a short briefing note)	35	(23%)
A combination of the above	87	(56%)
Other (please specify):		

- "Usually the technical advice is or should be provided by our Federal agency, the technical focal point of AEWa is located there. The need of information is dependent on the subject and the situation: however -in view of the constraints - usually the answer is "the more concise the better"."

### 3. Have you previously used guidance from any source for the conservation and/or management of waterbirds and/or their habitats?

Yes	102	(66%)
No	37	(24%)

#### 3a. If so, which sources have you used?

	Frequency
• AEWA Conservation Guidelines	26
• Scientific journals (incl. online)	19
• Books (incl. atlases, <i>Handbook of the Birds of the World</i> ) and conference proceedings	17
• BirdLife International (incl. Datazone and species sheets)	16
• Wetlands International (incl. Waterbird Population Estimates online)	16
• AEWA Technical publications	16
• Ramsar Convention guidance	16
• Governments and statutory institutes/agencies (incl. SNH, ONCFS)	13
• IUCN (incl. guidelines, Specialist Groups and Red List)	12
• AEWA Single Species Action Plans	12
• National research organisations (incl. e.g. SOVON, SV Sempach, Tour du Valat, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle de Paris)	10
• European Commission (incl. Commission guidance)	10
• Scientific colleagues and networks incl. conferences and national committees	10
• Organisational websites (incl. CAFF, protectedplanet.net, WWT Goose & Swan Monitoring Programme)	9
• Scientific reports	8
• Publications by national BirdLife partners (Vogelbescherming Nederland, NABU, BirdLife South Africa, RSPB)	8
• Convention on Migratory Species	5
• North American Waterbird Management Plan and linked guidance including websites of USFWS, US Forest Service & USGS, and the Migratory Birds Treaty	5
• Critical Site Network tool	4
• WOW – Wings Over Wetlands Toolkit	4
• Traditional knowledge	2
• RSPB habitat management guidance	2
• AEWA MOP National reports	2
• AEWA Conservation Status Review	2
• National action plans and management plans	2
• Conservationevidence.com	1
• HELCOM	1
• AEWA Plan of Action for Africa	1
• CITES	1
• BiodivERSA	1

#### 3b. Are there particularly good examples of information sources that you would recommend? If so, please could we have details?

Responses largely overlap with sources outlined above, but following comments relevant:

- “In North America there is many good examples of wetland restoration and waterfowl management that could be more widely applied in Europe taking into account the cultural and administrative differences.”

- “Il ne faut jamais négliger les sources d'information venant des Sages Traditionnels locaux. Il faudra toujours profiter de leur savoir traditionnel et de leur forme de gestion traditionnelle. La communauté locale est la bibliothèque où l'on peut tirer des meilleures informations relatives à la gestion des oiseaux et à la santé des habitats.”

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**4. How regularly do you use AEWA's existing Conservation Guidelines [<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/publications/technical-publications>] to inform your work?**

Never	15 (10%)
Occasionally (less than once a year)	77 (46%)
Regularly (at least once a year)	55 (36%)

Which specific Guidelines have you used so far?

Guidelines ranked by reported frequency of use

1. Preparation of National Single Species Action Plans	66 (43%)
9. Waterbird monitoring protocol	59 (38%)
5. Sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds	58 (38%)
4. Management of key sites	51 (33%)
7. Development of ecotourism at wetlands	35 (23%)
3. Preparation of site inventories	32 (21%)
11. How to avoid, minimize or mitigate impact of infrastructural developments and related disturbance affecting waterbirds	30 (19%)
8. Reducing crop damage, damage to fisheries, bird strikes and other forms of conflict between waterbirds and human activities	29 (19%)
14. How to avoid or mitigate impact of electricity power grids on migratory birds in the African-Eurasian region	28 (18%)
12. Measures needed to help waterbirds to adapt to climate change	24 (16%)
6. Regulating trade in migratory waterbirds	23 (15%)
13. Translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes: complementing the IUCN Guidelines	17 (11%)
10. Avoidance of Introductions of non-native waterbird species	15 (10%)
2. Identifying and tackling emergency situations	14 (9%)



**5. AEWA is currently reviewing the style and format of its Conservation Guidelines. Please indicate how useful you would find the following options in respect of your information needs**

Options ranked according to combined *Very useful* + *Extremely useful* responses

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Somewhat useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	<i>Extremely useful</i>	<i>Very + extremely useful</i>
Short briefing notes containing key points with guidance on further sources of more detailed information	4 (3%)	36 (23%)	50 (32%)	35 (23%)	85
More detailed, in-depth reviews of issues	10 (6%)	38 (25%)	64 (42%)	17 (11%)	81
Case studies	6 (4%)	36 (23%)	56 (36%)	24 (16%)	80
Guidance with more regional content (e.g. relevant to just some parts of the Agreement area)	4 (3%)	41 (27%)	56 (36%)	20 (13%)	76
Guidance on decision making processes and procedures (i.e. more policy related content)	9 (6%)	39 (25%)	48 (31%)	27 (18%)	75
Less detailed reviews, but summary syntheses of key areas	7 (5%)	46 (30%)	49 (32%)	18 (12%)	67
Specific content – covering a single issue (possibly in more detail) <sup>12</sup>	2 (1%)	30 (19%)	49 (32%)	14 (9%)	63
Broad content – covering many related issues (possibly in less detail)	21 (14%)	58 (38%)	29 (19%)	10 (6%)	39

If there are other issues related to the delivery of conservation guidance for migratory waterbirds, we would be please to receive these:

- You need to have material for 2 or 3 target groups. Higher level government policy (briefing notes), more technical staff (high level of detail, decision making process), land managers (case studies, practical advice, decision making processes)
- "Guidance with more regional content (e.g. relevant to just some parts of the Agreement area)" : on topics which are already covered by e.g. EC guidance documents, it might be good to concentrate on other parts of Agreement area.
- To allocate some resources for translating them into national languages. Communication should be done by national bird protection organizations!
- Probably some countries have nationally adopted and/or used guidelines on different aspects of the birds protection that can be of interest to other Parties. Those Parties can be invited to share such guidelines with others.
- Try to forward timely your varied number bulletin to e-mail of individuals working on conservation
- Make sure the guidelines are very easy to find on the AEWA website (no more than two clicks from homepage) and make sure the guidelines have a high Google ranking, if possible appearing on first page of Google searches for the relevant terms.
- Communication with key individuals to determine needs.
- DEVELOPMENT OF VIDEOS , AND INFORMATION ON MEMORY STICKS

<sup>12</sup> Comment: synthèse des connaissances sur un sujet donné, mais actualisée régulièrement (au moins annuellement) c'est-à-dire un document de référence "vivant"

- Direct face-to-face advice to key individuals is the most effective approach
- Fact Sheets, greater use of info-graphics, executive summaries, press briefing notes for each guideline

**5a. AEWA formally publishes its guidance in French and English. Resources permitting, into which other languages would be most useful for AEWA guidance to be additionally translated. Please rank, where 1 is highest priority:**

	1	2	4	4	5	Overall priority
Russian	30 (19%)	21 (14%)	13 (8%)	9 (6%)	6 (4%)	First
Arabic	21 (14%)	22 (14%)	15 (10%)	15 (10%)	4 (3%)	Second
Spanish	18 (12%)	9 (6%)	14 (9%)	12 (8%)	18 (12%)	Third
Swahili	9 (6%)	7 (5%)	14 (9%)	18 (12%)	21 (14%)	Fourth
Portuguese	7 (5%)	12 (14%)	14 (9%)	15 (10%)	24 (16%)	Fifth

Other languages (please specify)

- None were suggested

## 6. What are your current priority needs for information with respect to the conservation of waterbirds and their habitats?

Please rate the following areas indicating to what extent further information/guidance would be useful:

Options ranked according to combined *Very useful* + *Extremely useful* responses

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Somewhat useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	<i>Extremely useful</i>	<i>Very + Extremely useful</i>
Reducing conflicts with human interests	3 (2%)	19 (12%)	68 (44%)	40 (26%)	108
Management of land-use changes	3 (2%)	31 (20%)	60 (39%)	32 (21%)	92
Management of disturbance	6 (4%)	28 (18%)	67 (44%)	25 (16%)	92
Sustainable hunting	11 (7%)	26 (17%)	55 (36%)	36 (23%)	91
Control of invasive species	8 (5%)	37 (24%)	49 (32%)	32 (21%)	81
Management of protected areas	8 (5%)	39 (25%)	47 (31%)	33 (21%)	80
Other (please indicate below):					

Suggestions	Comment
• Restoration of degraded wetlands	Much guidance exists
• Stakeholders networking in wetlands	Ramsar Handbook #7 on stakeholder participation <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-07.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-07.pdf</a> and #5 on networks <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-05.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-05.pdf</a>
• Probably most useful/urgent to concentrate on the above mentioned topics on the non-EU areas of the Agreement. Sustainability of hunting is an interesting topic at the EU level as this has been recent discussed at EU level as well.	New guidance on hunting sustainability adopted at MOP6

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrating waterbird conservation in multifunctional landscapes. In many areas in the world development will increase in the future. Most of these areas can maintain a significant value for biodiversity (waterbirds in this case) if the planning and development is done taking this objective into account.</li> </ul>	How to address? Quite region-specific?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management of agriculture areas or how to make agriculture more sustainable &amp; friendly for waterbird</li> </ul>	Much guidance exists, but also relates to above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Examples of successful public awareness companies [= campaigns?]</li> <li>Communication and awareness-raising techniques with local stakeholders.</li> <li>PUBLIC AWARENESS (EXTREMELY USEFUL)</li> </ul>	<p>IUCN Handbook exists on this <a href="https://www.cbd.int/cepa/toolkit/2008/doc/CBD-Toolkit-Complete.pdf">https://www.cbd.int/cepa/toolkit/2008/doc/CBD-Toolkit-Complete.pdf</a></p> <p>And Ramsar Handbook #6 <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/hbk4-06.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/hbk4-06.pdf</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perhaps: guidance on assessing sufficiency of protected sites, within a state and across flyways. Particularly this would provide guidance on the general principles for understanding the different and complimentary roles that a) protected sites and b) wider measures both have in maintain/restoring conservation status, recognising that this may vary according to where in the flyway one is considering. Such guidance could help strategic design of flyway networks and focus on key requirements at critical life-stages of migratory (water)birds.</li> </ul>	Maybe joint with Ramsar?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think it would be great to produce something less topic specific perhaps but effectively offering advice to Ministry of Environment people on integrating waterbird concerns into the work of other ministries. Many are relatively poorly funded and weak in comparison to ministries of energy, transport, development etc. and case studies of how other countries work to integrate waterbird concerns cross-sectorally could be useful.</li> </ul>	<p>Interesting idea. = 'mainstreaming'</p> <p>Joint with Ramsar? Sensitive but case study route may be way in?</p> <p>Partly covered by Ramsar Handbooks #2 &amp; #3 <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/hbk4-02.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/hbk4-02.pdf</a> <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-03.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-03.pdf</a></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There should be coordination among different government agencies to effectively manage a wetland. Wetlands for irrigation purpose are not given importance for its biodiversity by the Irrigation Department, despite of it being a valuable habitat for variety of flora and fauna.</li> </ul>	Related to the issue above
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pour les pays en développement comme Madagascar, la transformation des lacs en riziculture reste toujours un problème difficile à gérer par les gestionnaires des zones humides.</li> </ul>	As above?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I think guidelines on monitoring and tackling illegal killing of birds would be a useful one that could build from the future work of the CMS Task Force and make use of material BirdLife has already drafted.</li> </ul>	Joint with CMS?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Population monitoring</li> <li>MONITORING OF WATERBIRDS (VERY USEFUL)</li> </ul>	Exists – AEWA Guideline #9

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listen to local knowledge. Listen to those who live remote and have seen the behavioural patterns of the birds.</li> </ul>	Traditional knowledge – already flagged as priority issue in SWG work plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combining all levels of management to incorporate all spatial scales.</li> </ul>	Not sure what the need exactly is
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Other concerns would include impacts of sea-level rise or storm surge events on coastal wetlands,</li> <li>ii. pollution events,</li> <li>iii. development of foreshore and tidal and/or offshore renewable energy installations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Climate change adaptation. AEWA Guideline #12. Also covered in part by Ramsar Handbook #6 <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-12.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-12.pdf</a></li> <li>ii. Covered in AEWA Guideline #2 – Emergency situations</li> <li>iii. Ramsar Handbook #6 also Ramsar guidance <a href="http://ramsar.rgis.ch/bn/bn3.pdf">http://ramsar.rgis.ch/bn/bn3.pdf</a></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specific guidance on mitigating impacts of sea level rise/ storms on biodiversity, from site selection through to options available would be useful</li> </ul>	Climate change adaptation - AEWA Guideline #12. Covered in part by Ramsar Handbook #6 <a href="http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-12.pdf">http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/lib/hbk4-12.pdf</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anticipation of climate change impact on populations' need, especially migratory stop over sites</li> </ul>	Climate change adaptation/site management - AEWA Guidelines#4 & #12.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Site management, especially on private land (Stewardship role)</li> </ul>	Already exists, AEWA Guideline #4, plus Ramsar Handbook #18 <a href="http://ramsar.rgis.ch/pdf/lib/hbk4-18.pdf">http://ramsar.rgis.ch/pdf/lib/hbk4-18.pdf</a> and also much IUCN guidance e.g. <a href="https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/edocs/PAG-010.pdf">https://portals.iucn.org/library/efiles/edocs/PAG-010.pdf</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What happened to Powerlines and Renewable Energy?</li> </ul>	?? Published?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>AEWA étant un accord pratique de la convention sur la biodiversité, je pense qu'un lobbying est nécessaire pour favoriser une plus grande attention budgétaire en sa faveur</li> </ul>	

#### Further concluding comments from respondents:

- Germany is dependent on AEWA for setting broad international standards, and ensuring monitoring that is consistent with other parties and range states. Germany carries out more detailed monitoring under the EU Birds Directive and for its own domestic purposes (e.g. Germany's Red List) so is to a large extent now independent/carries out work beyond the international requirements. AEWA's work is invaluable in terms of promoting conservation and introducing guidance in countries that have not yet got their own domestic standards themselves. Although Germany largely has its own (and by comparison quite strict) species legislation, the AEWA guidance on e.g. powerlines is useful for giving political weight to our own existing environmental standards where these are not being implemented fully yet.
- I'm very new to working with AEWA so I don't yet know all the opportunities and resources that exist. I also find that although there is some overlap of issues, working on seabirds is quite different to other waterbirds. We still need to figure out how best AEWA can assist with the conservation of the listed seabirds.
- My comment is to create national waterbirds committee, and organizing workshop and training, to bring all relevant stakeholders in the country.
- Best practise examples on all topics are always useful.
- My recent attendance at AEWA MOP was the start of a familiarisation process for me with the business of AEWA, so while my past use of such guidance is limited, I expect this to increase in the future.
- Would be useful to link this to the objectives of the Ramsar convention too, particularly its CEPA programme
- I plan to Educate myself on AEWA

- All the AEWA conservation guidance are very useful in some moment. Maybe they just could be more detailed.
- AEWA IS A DYNAMIC CONVENTION AS FAR AS INFORMATION DELIVERY IS CONCERN
- Apologies - I don't think my submission is all that helpful, but that is because BTO is more a potential provider of information to AEWA, rather than being an end-user. We undertake research and monitoring, but don't actively undertake management and conservation ourselves.
- As a source of useful information that could help inform the work we do, particularly in policy-related areas, I don't immediately think of AEWA as the first place to look. I think raising the profile of the work that you do amongst the wider scientific community and NGO and government agencies would be worthwhile.
- Most users probably need more concise and focused guidance than me, but I think it's important that detailed advice is available for those who need it. Different audiences would benefit from different approaches, e.g. needs in much of Africa and the Middle East are less sophisticated than in much of Europe. I think the guidance should include numerous, links to a large number of web-based sources, and a process is needed to ensure that these links are kept up to date.
- Nice survey! ;-)
- AEWA reports are a recognised source of respected information and they have an invaluable role to play, especially if their scope is expanded.