



NATIONAL REPORT

REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

**AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY
WATERBIRDS (The Hague, 1995)**

Implementation during the period 2003 and 2005

Contracting Party: BULGARIA

Designated AEWA Administrative Authority: Ministry of Environment and Water

Full name of the institution:

Name and title of the head of the institution: Dolores Arsenova – Minister

Mailing address: 67, William Gladstone Str.

Telephone: (+ 359 2) 940 6222

Fax: (+ 359 2) 986 2533

Email:

**Name and title (if different) of the designated contact officer
for AEWA matters: Valeri Georgiev**

**Mailing address (if different) for the designated contact
officer: 22, Maria Luisa Blvd**

Telephone: (+ 359 2) 940 6151

Fax: (+ 359 2) 980 9641

Email: nnpsf@moew.government.bg

Table of Contents

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation	5
2. Species conservation	5
Legal measures	5
Single Species Action Plans	6
Emergency measures	7
Re-establishments	7
Introductions	7
3. Habitat conservation	8
Habitat inventories	8
Conservation of areas	8
Rehabilitation and restoration	9
4. Management of human activities	9
Hunting	9
Eco-tourism	10
Other human activities	10
5. Research and monitoring	11
Status of research and monitoring programmes for species	11
6. Education and information	11
Training and development programmes	11
Raising public awareness	12
7. Final comments	12
8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties	12
9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions	12
List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report	13
References	13
Appendices	13
Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans	13
Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance	13
Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance	14
Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects	14
Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	14

Appendix 6:	List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	14
Appendix 7:	List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years	14

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

1.1 Summary of progress to date

The main activities that were undertaken during the last three years were focused mainly to the monitoring of the migratory bird and habitat conservation. The monitoring is carried out annually as part of the International activities in this field. The Ministry of Environment and Water has ensured the protection and management of the most important water habitats which are sites with International importance.

As an EU candidate member Bulgaria has elaborated similar legislation in field of the protection of wild species as EU. The legislation is based on the general principles on sustainable use.

1.2 Outline of planned actions for national implementation over the next three years

1.2.1. The main goal for the next three years is execution of a project about identification of possible areas for construction of Wind Generators which with non detrimental effect on the migratory birds.

1.2.2. Monitoring of the breeding colony of the Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*).

1.2.3. Monitoring of migratory and wintering birds.

1.3 Outline of priorities for international co-operation over the next three years

2. Species conservation

Legal measures

2.1 Has a national policy/strategy or legislation to protect and conserve species covered by the Agreement (Table 1: column A; column B) and their supporting important areas been developed? If so:

a. What are the main features of the policy/legislation?

1. Protection of birds;
2. Protection of Bird habitats;
3. Determination of Important Birds Habitats
4. Hunting periods in place;

All native bird species listed in table 1 (column A; column B) except some Anas species and *Galinago galinago* which are object of hunting are strictly protected by the Biodiversity National Law. The use of the hunting species is regulated by the Hunting and Game Protection Act.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

Ministry of Environment and Water

c. How does it relate to other national initiatives (e.g. national Biodiversity Action Plans)?

Some activities about the protection of the species and their habitats are integrated in the National Biodiversity Conservation Plan.

2.2 What legal measures or practices has your country developed to prohibit or regulate for the following (refer also to section 4 on hunting):

a. Taking of, and trade in birds listed in Column A and B of Table 1 (where utilization or trade contravenes the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 (a) and 2.1.2 of the Action Plan)?

The Bulgarian legislation ensures prohibition of taking bird and eggs, disturbance of those birds during the breeding period. The possession has been prohibited for the specie listed in Column A except for *Anser anser* which is a hunting species.

b. Methods of taking?

If taking is allowed by exemption the methods are usually described into the permits.

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?

No

d. Sustainable hunting of species listed in Categories 2 and 3 (and marked by an asterisk) in Column A only?

All native specimens listed with Categories 2 and 3 are protected by Biodiversity Act, except *Anser anser* which is a subject to the Hunting and Game Protection Act.

e. Exemptions to the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3?

Exceptions for taking of bird and their eggs, could be granted from the Ministry of Environment and Water for the following reasons:

1. to protect species of wild flora and fauna and for conservation of natural habitats;
2. to prevent serious damage to crops, forests, fisheries, water, fisheries and other forms of property;
3. in the interests of public health and safety, including air safety or by other reasons of overriding public interest;
4. for the purposes of research and education upon introduction or reintroduction of species and for the breeding necessary to this.

Single Species Action Plans

2.3 Of the species covered by the Agreement (species listed in Table 1: column A), which spend part or all of their life history in your country, which have formal international (Category 1, species marked with an asterisk) or national (column A) Single Species Action Plans:

a. Proposed? - No

b. In preparation?

Five Action Plans are under preparation for the threatened waterbird species listed in Table 1; Column A, as follow:

1. *Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*
2. *Branta ruficollis*
3. *Aythya niroca*
4. *Oxyura leucocephala*
5. *Numenius tenuirostris*

According the Biodiversity Act all Action plans have to be provided to the National Biodiversity Council before to approved by the Minister of Environment and Water.

c. Being implemented? - No

Please append a list of species and their action plan status. (For international plans indicate which other countries are involved in plan development/implementation.)

Emergency measures

2.4 Describe any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action that your country has undertaken to develop and implement emergency measures to conserve species in response to unfavourable or endangering conditions occurring in the Agreement area.

No

Re-establishments

2.5 Has a policy on species re-establishments been developed in your country? If yes, please outline the main features of the policy and give details of any re-establishment programmes for species covered by the Agreement.

No

Introductions

2.6 Has your country developed and implemented legal measures to prohibit the introduction of nonnative species? Please provide details, particularly describing measures to control the release or introduction of non-native species (please indicate which species and their status).

According to the Biodiversity Act (SG. 77/2002) introduction on nonnative species could be executed only under permission from Head of National Forestry Board, for the hunting species, and from the MoEW for the others species. Those institutions could prohibit the introduction of nonnative species which can be detrimental for the survival of the native species and will threaten their habitats. The procedures of granting of permits for such introduction have been set under the provision of the Regulation No 4 (SG. 65/2003).

No introduction activities in place at present.

3. Habitat conservation

Habitat inventories

3.1 Has your country developed and published inventories of important habitats for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, please provide details, including any provisions to maintain or update these inventories.

Yes. The publication of Important Bird Areas in Bulgaria was published in 1997. The joint project named "Conservation of Species and Habitats in Bulgaria: EU Approximation", know as Natura 2000 was completed in the end of 2004. The project was implemented with the financial support by DEPA (DANCEE programme) of the Danish Ministry of Environment. The project was prolonged with the financial support of the Ministry of Environment and Water. The main task of the project is determination of the most important habitats of Bulgaria which have to be included as part of the European Ecological Net.

3.2 Has your country undertaken a strategic review of sites to develop a national network of important sites or areas for species covered by the Agreement? Please append a list of identified sites of international importance.

Yes.

Conservation of areas

3.3 Describe the legal frameworks and other measures through which sites (including transfrontier sites) including of international importance gain practical protection. (Please append a list of internationally important protected sites.)

Bulgaria has designated several protected sites under Protected Areas Act (1998). Some of those areas have been designated as Ramsar sites. Those sites had been designated for protection of the migratory bird species.

3.4 Has your country developed a management planning process for protected sites? If yes, please outline the types of management plans and organisations responsible for development and implementation.

Yes. The MoEW is obliged to implement the existing management plans.

3.5 How many protected sites have formal management plans (please append a list of sites

and their management planning status):

- a. Proposed? - No
- b. In preparation?

Three management plans (MP) for the wetland with international importance are in preparation, as follow:

1. MP of Vaja Lake;
2. MP of Belene Islands Complex;
3. MP of Kalimok-Brashlen Marsh.

- c. Being implemented?

Five MPs for the wetland with international importance are approved by the MoEW.

3.6 What measures does your country have in place to ensure the wise use of wetland habitats and to prevent habitat degradation e.g. pollution control and managing water resources? Please provide examples of best practice initiatives particularly involving cross-sectoral co-operation or public participation.

Rehabilitation and restoration

3.7 Does your country have a policy for the identification, rehabilitation and restoration of wetlands important for species covered by the Agreement? Please provide examples of rehabilitation and restoration projects and initiatives undertaken.

Yes. One Wetland restoration project exists at present. The main goal of project is restoration of the wetland on the Belene Islands Complex on Danube River and Kalimok-Brashlen Marsh. The project is funded by the World Bank.

4. Management of human activities

Hunting

4.1 Outline the main features of legislation or legal measures in your country to control hunting of the species covered by the Agreement (e.g. use of lead shot and poisoned baits, and to eliminate illegal taking).

The Hunting and Game Protection Act (SG. 78/200) regulates the hunting activities in the country. The Act describes the procedures about:

1. Protection and management of the game species;
2. Organization of the hunting;
3. Licensing of the hunters;

4.2 Does your country monitor hunting levels? If so, how is this information collated and

reported?

Yes. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forest (MAF) regulates the hunting level through its regional forestry boards.

4.3 Describe action undertaken by hunting clubs and organisations to manage hunting activity e.g. cooperative action, issuing of licences and proficiency testing of individual members.

The responsible body for issuance of licensing for hunters is a special commission, designated by the MAF. All candidates for hunters have to pass an examination in order to get license.

Eco-tourism

4.4 What is the status of eco-tourism programmes or initiatives in your country? Please provide examples of projects with an indication of the significant outcomes.

4.5 What social and economic benefits accrue to the local communities from the conservation of important waterbird sites?

Other human activities

4.6 Does your country carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of activities potentially affecting protected sites or areas important for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, briefly describe the main features of your EIA policy and procedures.

Yes. The preparation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has been regulated by the Environmental Act (SG. 91/2002). According to the Act, Environmental assessment (EA) and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) shall be conducted for plans, programmes and development proposals for construction, activities and technologies or modifications thereof, whereof the implementation is likely to have significant effects on the environment as follows:

1. environmental assessment shall be conducted of plans or programmes which are in a process of preparation and/or approval by central or local executive authorities and the National Assembly.
2. EIA shall be conducted for development proposals for execution of some construction, activities and technologies which are listed in Annexes 1 and 2 of the Act.

The objective of the environmental assessment and of the EIA is to integrate environmental considerations into the process of development as a whole with a view to introducing the principle of sustainable development.

4.7 Please describe the main features of your planning policy and provide examples of practical implementation (e.g. activities to minimising disturbance of species populations or limit the impact of species populations on crops or fisheries). Please summarize any land-use conflicts especially emphasising successful solutions to problems encountered in promoting the wise-use of waterbirds and their habitats.

5. Research and monitoring

Status of research and monitoring programmes for species

5.1 How are priorities for research identified in your country? Please briefly describe your country's research programmes, including any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action, for wetland habitats and for species covered by the Agreement (e.g. studies into species population, ecology and migratory patterns). Please append a list of research activities initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years.

5.2 What monitoring activities does your country undertake, including any bilateral or multilateral cooperative action, of wetland areas and species covered by the Agreement (e.g. national monitoring schemes, International Waterfowl Census)? Please append a list of monitoring activities or programmes initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years

The Middle Winter Waterbird Census has been carried out annually.

In 2004 has been completed the last of every 10 years conducted White Stork Census.

The similar activities for migratory bird census take place annually from the middle of august to middle of September along Black Sea coast on the Migratory Road *Via Pontica*.

Monitoring of the breeding success in the colony of Dalmatian pelican located in Srebarna Lake.

6. Education and information

Training and development programmes

6.1 Describe the status of training and development programmes which support waterbird conservation and implement the AEWA Action Plan.

6.2 What bilateral or multilateral co-operative action is your country undertaking to develop training programmes and share examples of good practice?

Raising public awareness

6.3 Describe activities to raise public awareness of the objectives of the AEWA Action Plan. Please outline any particular successes generating public interest in, and securing support for, waterbird and wetland conservation (e.g. campaigns, information notes or other initiatives)?

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

7.2 Observations concerning the functions and services of the various AEWA bodies

- a. *The Agreement Secretariat*
- b. *International organisations*
- c. *AEWA NGO partners*

7.3 How might the Action Plan be further developed as a practical aid for national and international conservation of migratory waterbirds?

8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties

Please summarize progress to implement decisions of previous Meetings of the Parties.

9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions

Contracting Parties are invited to outline below any further information regarding the aims of the Agreement, for example, planned actions or other informative examples.

1. Species conservation

2. Habitat conservation

Designation of Bird Areas as part of the Ecological net of European Union.

3. Management of human activities

4. Research and monitoring

Researches and assessment of the areas along Bulgarian Black Sea coast suitable for planning and development of Wind Farms in order to prevent from possible collision with migratory birds.

Annual monitoring of migratory birds to be carried out.

5. Education and information

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment

EA - Environmental Assessment

MAF – Ministry of Agriculture and Forest

MP – Management Plan

MoEW – Ministry of Environment and Water

References

Heath, M. F. and Evans, M.I., eds (2000) **Important Bird Areas in Europe: Priority sites for Conservation. 2: Southern Europe**, Cambridge, UK: BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 8)

Kostadinova, I. (comp), 1997. **Important Bird Areas in Bulgaria**. BSPB Conservation Series. Book 1, Sofia, BG.

Petkov, N. 2003. **Status and Distribution of the Ferruginous Duck in Bulgaria**. In: Petkov, Hughes, Gallo-Orsi (eds) **Ferruginous Duck: From Research to Conservation**, BSPB Conservation Series No6.

Petkov, N. 2003. **Ferruginous Duck Habitat Characteristics and Diurnal Activity Rhythm in Bulgaria**. In: Petkov, Hughes, Gallo-Orsi (eds) **Ferruginous Duck: From Research to Conservation**, BSPB Conservation Series No6.

Petkov, N. 2003. **Trends in the Bulgarian Ferruginous Duck Population 1997-2002**. TWSG News 14.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans

No Single Species Action Plans for birds in place.

Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

1. **Atanasovsko Lake**. Ramsar site since 28/11/1984. Burgas. 1,404 ha. 42°34'N 027°28'E.
2. **Belene Islands Complex**. Ramsar site since 24/09/2002. Pleven. 6,898 ha. 43°40'N 025°11'E.
3. **Durankulak Lake**. Ramsar site since 28/11/84; Varna; 350 ha; 43°42'N 028°30'E.
4. **Ibisha Island**. Ramsar site since 24/09/2002. Montana. 372 ha. 43°49'N 023°31'E.
5. **Lake Shabla**. Ramsar site since 19/03/96; 404 ha; 43°35'N 028°33'E.
6. **Poda**. Ramsar site since 24/09/2002. Burgas. 307 ha. 42°27'N 027°27'E.
7. **Pomorie Wetland Complex**. Ramsar site since 24/09/2002. Burgas. 814 ha. 42°35'N 027°37'E.
8. **Srebarna**. Ramsar site since 24/09/1975. Silistra. 1,357 ha. 44°06'N 027°04'E.

Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance

Management plans are in place:

1. MP of Atanasovsko Lake;
2. MP of Durankulak Lake;

3. MP of Lake Shabla;
4. MP of Poda;
5. MP of Srebarna Lake

Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

Researches and assessment of the areas along Bulgarian Black Sea coast suitable for planning and development of Wind Farms in order to prevent from possible collision with migratory birds.

Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

1. Ministry of Environment And Water
2. Bulgarian Academy of Science

Appendix 6: List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

www.moew.government.bg

Appendix 7: List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years.

1. Waterbird conservation project at the Pomorie Lake. Increasing of nesting ground on artificial island for the Sandwich and Common Terns. Implemented by the Green Balkan Federation of Nature Conservation NGOs.
2. Researches and assessment of the areas along Bulgarian Black Sea coast suitable for planning and development of Wind Farms in order to prevent from possible collision with migratory birds.