

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, 1979

African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and Action Plan

Implementation during the period 1999 and 2001

Contracting Party: Denmark

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1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

1.1 Summary of progress to date

The Danish Legislation especially on hunting and wildlife management already fulfilled the obligations of the AEWa Agreement and the Action Plan at the time when Denmark became member of the Agreement.

As presented in the following report the implementation of actions mentioned in the Action Plan has currently been undertaken, e.g. establishing of wildlife reserves, restoration and rehabilitation of wetlands, persecution of alien invasive species etc.

1.2 Outline of priorities for national implementation over the next three years

Monitoring of waterbirds and the annual bag.

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

Continued cooperation with Guinea-Bissau on waterbird and IBA surveys, training and public awareness until 2004.

Continued cooperation with Germany and The Netherlands on the protection of the Wadden Sea.

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?

The protection of the species covered by the Agreement is covered by the Hunting and Game Management Act. The purpose of the Act is to safeguard game populations which are rich in species and individuals, and to create the basis of sustainable management, by (1) protecting the game, particularly during the breeding season, (2) safeguarding the quantity and quality of game habitats by establishing game reserves and by otherwise establishing, re-establishing and protecting game habitats, and (3) regulating hunting so that it takes place according to ecological and ethical principles and with due consideration of the protection of game, particularly of rare and threatened species. In the administration of the Act consideration of the population's recreational needs shall be weighed against the game protection consideration. More than 100 wildlife reserves have been established with no or limited hunting and no or limited public access.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

Danish Forest and Nature Agency.

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

The administration and implementation of the above mentioned Act is supplementary to and harmonizes with other Danish legislation and policies/strategies on nature protection.

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 utilisation or trade contravenes the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 (a) and 2.1.2 of the Action Plan)?

All the species on the Agreements Table 1, column A are totally protected according to the Hunting and Game Management Act. Some of the species in column B have an open season which does not contravene with the provisions set out in paragraph 2.1.2 of the Action Plan. Trading is not allowed for any of the species in Column A and B.

b. Methods of taking?

Only firearms are allowed.

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?

There are no taking limits. The total bag is registered annually. All hunters are obliged to inform the Danish Forest and Nature Agency of their yearly bag of game including waterfowl.

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

The birds mentioned and occurring in Denmark (only one species: *Netta rufina*) have no open season. *Anser albifrons* in Greenland has an open season from 1 September to 15 October.

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

It is allowed to shoot *Anser anser* on unharvested fields in July and August which is outside the open season to avoid crop damage.

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?

- c. In preparation?

The Danish Ornithological Society is preparing a proposal for a national action plan on the Black Stork (*Ciconia nigra*) to be finished in 2003.

- d. Being implemented?

The Danish Ornithological Society has in 2000 published a national action plan for the White Stork, which is under implementation.

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.

Aerial surveys on oil pollution at sea have been intensified and co-ordinated with neighbouring countries in order to minimize oil-kills of birds at sea. The whole Wadden Sea in Denmark, Germany and The Netherlands have recently been nominated by IMO (International Maritime Organisation) as a PSSA (Particular Sensitive Sea Area) in order to minimize the risk of oil pollution etc.

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.

There is no need for a policy on this issue in Denmark because no waterbird species have disappeared from the country and for which it would be relevant to re-introduce them. The general policy in Denmark is to maintain and restore wetlands so that the wetland bird species have the possibility to immigrate by themselves.

Introductions

- 2.6 Has your country developed and implemented legal measures to prohibit the introduction of non-native 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 Hunting and Game Management Act it is prohibited to introduce non-native species in Denmark, and even native waterbird species except from the Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) which can be released without permission. Recently The Danish Forest and Nature Agency has decided to extirpate any specimens of the Ruddy Duck (*Oxyura jamaicensis*) which occur in Denmark in order to help to minimize the risk of hybridization with the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*). The same is due to the Egyptian Goose in order to prevent their potential competition with native species.

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.

111 areas, mainly internationally important wetlands, have been designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) according to the EEC Bird Directive. 27 of these are Ramsar Sites according to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. Information on these sites has been published in books and on the home-page of the Danish Forest and Nature Agency: <http://natura2000.sns.dk/fugleomraader.htm>.

- 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.

See point 3.1 and Appendix 2.

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.)

Concerning the list of internationally important protected sites, see point 3.1 and Appendix 2. These sites are protected according to the provisions in the EEC Bird Directive and the

Ramsar Convention. Furthermore, the sites as a whole or partly are protected according to national legislation e.g as nature conservation areas and/or wildlife reserves.

- 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.

A management planning system is under development for all Danish NATURA 2000-Sites including conservation goals, monitoring and management.

- 3.5 How many protected sites have formal management plans (please append a list of sites and their management planning status):

- a. Proposed?
- b. In preparation?
- c. Being implemented?

In all the protected sites mentioned above (111 SPAs) management plans have been proposed, prepared or are being implemented for their total areas or parts of them.

- 3.6 What measures does your country have in place to ensure the wise use of wetlands 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.

In Denmark the national wetland policy is covered by an integrated and a comprehensive set of nature protection and environmental laws and strategies which also complies with article 6 of the Convention of Biological Diversity. Article 6 states that countries shall prepare national strategies for protecting, and for the sustainable exploitation of, biodiversity. Denmark has prepared a national biodiversity strategy report after a consultation procedure which involved central and regional authorities and NGO's. It is recognized that biodiversity is an extremely broad concept. In the final analysis, it can be stressed that the aim of the entire nature and environmental conservation effort in Denmark is the preservation of biodiversity. The most relevant legal instruments regarding conservation and wise use of wetland are the following:

1. The Nature Protection Act (1997)
2. The Act on the Structure of Agriculture (1999)
3. The Raw Materials Act (1997)
4. The Action Plan of the Aquatic Environment (1987, revised 1998 and 2001)
5. The Act relating to protection of the Tøndermarsh (1994)
6. The Hunting and Game Management Act (1993, revised 1997)
7. The Marine Environment Act (1993)

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.

One of the most important contribution to the implementation of the Biodiversity Convention is rehabilitation and restoration of wetlands and other wildlife habitats. The objectives of the Danish Biodiversity Strategy are to restore 30,000 hectares of lakes and 8,000 hectares of saltmarshes before 2019. Many smaller and larger wetland have been restored since 1989, e.g. River Skjernå and its surroundings, Vest Stadil Fjord, and lake Filsø

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).

Only hunting with shotguns and rifles is allowed. Use of lead shots and poisoned baits is totally banned. All huntable waterbird species can only be shot from 1 September until 31 December or 1 October until 31 January.

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

The total bag of the Danish hunters is yearly recorded. Each hunted is obliged to inform the authorities of their yearly bag. The results are published yearly in a separate information brochure to the hunters. If the bag of a waterbird species has significantly declined it is considered to close or reduce the open season for the species. The intensity of shooting in selected areas has been recorded by the Danish Ornithological Society, and as a result of these investigations the hunting possibilities have been reduced so that waterbird shooting can only be rented for at least one year.

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

The Danish Hunting Association offers possibilities to practice clay pigeon shooting in order to minimize crippling of waterbirds hunted. The Association has supported and supplemented a large campaign by the Danish Forest and Nature Agency against crippling of waterbirds hunted.

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.

A programme for nature interpretation has been established and is well functioning, including guided tours for tourists and bird watchers. Many bird observation towers and

hides have been established at important wetlands. Information about all the possibilities can be found on the internet www.naturnet.dk.

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

Specific calculations have not been made, but there is no doubt that the local economy benefits from the above mentioned initiatives.

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.

The main features of the Danish EIA are that companies or others making specific constructions such as large husbandry farms, infrastructures, airports, and wind farms etc. have to make an assessment of the potential impact on the surrounding environment, including wetlands and waterbirds. If the impact is assessed to be significantly negative alleviating measures has to be carried out or the construction may even be translocated to another geographic position or may even be given up. The demands for carrying out EIAs are dependant upon the character and size of the development proposals or change in land/water use. Typically small projects do not require EIAs due to e.g. specified criteria for lower limits of agricultural development projects.

- 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).

Impact from sailing, hunting and other recreational activities have been minimised by established more than 100 wildlife reserves with restrictions or total bans on public access and/or hunting in vulnerable periods of the year.

- 4.7 Please summarize any land-use conflicts emphasising successful solutions to problems encountered in promoting the wise-use of waterbirds and their habitats.

There are only limited conflicts between land-use and waterbirds. In some areas damage may occur in farmland crops. No economic compensations are payed, but alleviating measures can be carried out in some cases supported by the authorities. Feeding of geese, establishing specific feeding crops for geese, shooting for scaring etc. are examples of such alleviating measures.

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.

The National Environmental Research Institute has a primary research activity focussed on identifying bottlenecks in the annual migratory movements of long-distance migrating waterbirds, a research topic highly essential to AEW and fly-way management of waterbird populations. Focal species has been (and several still are): Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo*, Mute Swan *Cygnus olor*, Bewick's Swan *C. columbianus*, Whooper Swan *C. cygnus*, Grey-lag Goose *Anser anser*, Pink-footed Goose *A. brachyrhynchus*, White-fronted Goose *A. albifrons*, Brent Goose *Branta bernicla*, Teal *Anas crecca*, Eider *Somateria mollissima*, and Black Scoter *Melanitta nigra*. Work has been carried out not only in Denmark, but also in several stop-over and breeding locations of birds wintering in Western Europe, including Greenland, Iceland, northern Norway, Svalbard, and low-arctic Russia. Issues covered are manifold, such as habitat use and feeding ecology of wintering, staging and moulting birds; breeding biology; flight energetics and stop-over ecology on long-distance migrations; survival analysis; and population dynamics. Several studies have dealt with human impacts on populations, dealing with several of the focal species mentioned above, but also a variety of other waterbirds and waders. Issues covered are hunting mortality and disturbance; impacts of large-scale constructions (bridge and wind-turbine parks); and eutrophication effects on food supplies. A new issue is effects of water-table management in coastal lagoons and fresh-water marshes on breeding and staging birds numbers and ecology.

- 5.2 What monitoring activities does your country undertake, including any bilateral or multilateral co-operative 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 Danish monitoring scheme includes the International Waterfowl Census in the middle of January. In most years a reduced count is undertaken containing surveys of waterbirds from aircraft in 8 areas and from the grounds in 40 areas. With irregularly intervals total national surveys are undertaken that cover all inland sites and inshore and offshore waterbodies. The last total survey took place in 2000. Whooper Swan, Bewick's Swan and all goose species are covered totally in mid-winter also in years with reduced midwinter censuses. All data from the surveys are sent to Wetlands International's IWC Database, Goose Database, Wader Database and Seaduck Database. The Seaduck Database was originally initiated by and still organised by National Environmental Research Institute in Denmark.

The scheme also includes all annual international counts of geese in Europe; i.e. Barnacle Geese *Branta leucopsis* count in the middle of March, Brent Geese in the beginning of May, Grey-lag Geese in the middle of September and Bean Geese *Anser fabalis* and White-fronted Geese in the middle of November. All data are sent to Wetlands International's Goose Database.

Denmark is part of the Trilateral Wadden Sea project between The Netherlands, Germany and Denmark. The waterbird monitoring is organised by two groups JMBB (breeding

birds) and JMMB (migratory birds). The breeding birds programme includes annual monitoring of selected breeding waterbirds on a limited number of sites and total monitoring of breeding waterbirds every five years. The migratory species are monitored by spring-tide counts (twice a month) on selected roosting sites for waterbirds. Previously Denmark has undertaken additional aerial surveys of waterbird 5-7 times a year covering all inshore areas of the Wadden Sea, but these counts has ceased by the end of 2001. A part of the Trilateral Wadden Sea cooperation also includes a project on waterbird and IBA surveys, training and public awareness in Guinea-Bissau from 1995-2004.

During 1994-2001 Denmark implemented c. 50 new reserves, all situated within EEC Bird Directive Special Protection Areas, and aimed at protecting migratory waterbirds from disturbance from hunting, speed boating and windsurfing. An intensive monitoring programme has been following the waterbirds response on the new reserve network.

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.

There is a long tradition for making waterbirds counts in Denmark, and the experience is transferred currently to young ornithologists in a process of “learning by doing”.

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

In cooperation with Wetlands International and the two other Waddensea states Germany and The Netherlands, Denmark has carried out a programme since 1995 on “Waterbird and IBA surveys, training and public awareness in Guinea-Bissau”.

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)?

On the homepage of the Danish Forest and Nature Agency a link has been established to the homepage of the agreement.

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

No special comments.

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

a. The Agreement Secretariat

The service by the secretariat of producing the newsletter is satisfactory.

b. International organisations

No special comments.

c. AEWA NGO partners

No special comments.

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

Elaboration of specific projects should be further supported in order to enhance the possibilities of funding of bilateral or multilateral projects, especially in Africa and Eastern Europe.

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.

Denmark has been working generally for the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations and for improving the conditions for the waterbirds and their habitats, e.g. by a ban on lead shots (see 4.1), by continuing the cooperation project with Guinea-Bissau (see 6.2), by preparing national single species action plans for Black and White Stork (see 2.3 b and c), and by participating in preparing a draft on an international species action plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose.

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

In order to implement the existing international species action plan for the Corncrake *Crex crex* Denmark has developed a national action plan which is currently under implementation.

In order to implement the existing international species action plan for the Bittern *Botaurus stellaris* Denmark has successfully implemented management plans for some of its most important breeding sites and has successfully restored some former breeding localities.

2. Habitat conservation

Denmark has proposed about 200 areas to the EU-Commission as Special Areas for Conservation (SACs) of habitats and species of animals and plants. A significant number of these areas are wetlands areas and habitats for waterbird species included in the AEW A Agreement.

3. Management of human activities

4. Research and monitoring

5. Education and information

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

References

Appendices

Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans

Not included - see point 2.3 b and c, where the necessary information is given.

Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

Included as a copy of the executive order on the demarcation and administration of international protection areas. Included in the executive order are lists of Ramsar Sites (page 26) and EC Special Protection Areas for birds (page 23-25) where the main part of the areas are of special relevance for the AEWA Agreement.

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

Not included – see point 3.5 and Appendix 2.

Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

Included as a copy of the homepage of the National Environmental Research Institute.

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

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

See Appendix 5 above.

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

Not included – see point 3.7 for restoration projects and 4.7 for wildlife reserves.