



FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES

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

Implementation during the period 2006 and 2008

Contracting Party: GHANA

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1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

Summary of progress to date

Very little was achieved in the implementation of the obligations of the AEWA in areas of international cooperation, particularly with AEWA NGO partners in the field of training and capacity building to address issues related species and habitat conservation, research and monitoring, education and information management. Ghana, however, responded to some questionnaires on the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands and AEWA review of waterbird species re-establishment project.

On national front, much effort was concentrated on conserving existing Important Bird Areas (IBAs), covering an area of 11,494.5 km² or 4.8% of the country's total land area. Thirty-four of these IBAs come under one conservation status or the other as Forest Reserves, Wildlife Protected Areas, Community Wildlife Sanctuaries and coastal Ramsar Sites.

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

Ghana's planned actions for national implementation of the AEWA over the next three years (and beyond) is incorporated in a recently revised and adopted *National Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2016)*. The Strategy seeks, among others, to designate more wetlands for inclusion on the Ramsar List of *Wetlands of International Importance*. This is to encourage a strategic approach to wetland conservation covering all species and their habitats and to contribute to global environmental protection and maintenance of global biodiversity. The Wetlands Strategy consists of nine inter-related modules, where the implementation of the activities of one module supports that of the others and has direct actions, among others, to the implementation of the tenets of Ramsar Convention and AEWA. These are:

- Participatory approach;
- Legal framework;
- Wetlands Inventory, Monitoring and Research;
- Wetlands Restoration and Rehabilitation;
- Long-term Sustainability;
- Contribution to Poverty Reduction;
- Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA);
- Networking and International Cooperation; and
- Funding.

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

The main priorities for Ghana are:

- Strengthening formal communication links of (the very few) national government and non-government institutions/organizations whose mandates and activities contribute to the conservation of AEWA, and
- Solicit their commitment to share and respond positively to all relevant international institution/organizations in areas of research, monitoring, training, capacity building and funding of activities for the implementation of the Action Plans of all the

Biodiversity/Environment related Treaties and Agreements (including AEWA) that Ghana is signatory to.

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:

No. There is no specific policy/strategy or legislation to protect and conserve species covered by the Agreement. However, there is the Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan and a host of other existing natural resources protection policies or legislations that seek to conserve in general, forests, wild animals, including birds and their habitats. These policies or legislations also call for continuous education and public awareness and support for protecting these natural resources and their habitats.

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

The main features of such policies/strategies or legislation include values:

- Recognition of different conservation status of wildlife;
- Regulation of harvest period; means of harvest; trading, etc.
- Protection of habitats;
- Provision for public education, awareness and participation in wildlife management;

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission is responsible for implementation and in this regard collaborates with other NGOs.

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

Implementation is in line with National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (NBCS) – the NBCS (and other international initiatives) are cited as preamble to national initiatives to augment or strengthen each other in their implementation arrangements.

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)?

b. Methods of taking?

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?

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

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

(Ans. to a. b. c. d. e. above) National legislation regulates all harvesting and trade in wildlife, including birds.

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:*

No single species Action Plan

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

Please append a list of species and their action plan status. (For international plans indicate which other countries are involved in plan development/implementation.) **Not applicable**

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. **None**

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).*

No

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. There has been a publication of Important Bird Areas (IBA) covering the West Africa sub-region and associated islands. [Ref. Fishpool, L. D. C. and Evans, M. I., eds. (2001) *Important Bird Areas in Africa and associated islands: Priority sites for conservation*. Newbury and Cambridge, UK: Pisces Publications and BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 11). Pg 367-389.]

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. **No**

Conservation of areas

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

Government provides appropriate legal frameworks for the enforcement of the principles and obligations of the various conventions, treaties, agreements, accords, etc. within established sites of traditional, national and/or international importance (Ramsar sites / Protected Areas / Forest Reserves, etc). In this regard, lead implementing agencies of biodiversity-related conventions such as the Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission, are resourced and trained within the operational limits of the law to provide practical protection of the sites.

The framework provides recognition of different conservation status/schedule of wildlife protection; harvest periods and “close seasons”; means of harvest; trading; protection of habitats; provision for public education, awareness and participation in wildlife management;

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. Integrated system of management plans, which cover detail issues including, ecological features, flora, fauna, biological and physical, human and socio-cultural, economic. Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission is responsible for the development and implementation of the Management Plans.

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

Fifteen (15) sites have formal management plans, however, almost of them need to be revised.

a. Proposed?

b. In preparation?

c. Being implemented? **All the 15 have been / are being implemented**

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.

Ghana has developed and adopted a National Wetlands Conservation Strategy & Action Plan (NWCSAP) covering a strategic period of 2007-2016;

There is a functional broad stakeholder National Wetlands Committee that is overseeing the implementation of the NWCSAP; All five coastal Ramsar Sites have respective site specific Management Committee the supports the Ramsar Administrative Authority in managing these sites.

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.

No. Wetlands rehabilitation and restoration (localize or regional in scope) is based on a broad ecosystem approach and the needs of the people. E.g.: the Korle-lagoon ecological restoration project (which is national in scope) and the Obane river restoration project in the Songor Ramsar Site (which is community-based in scope).

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).

There is a general legislation covering all hunting of wild animals, including migratory waterbirds.

4.2 Does your country monitor hunting levels? If so, how is this information collated and reported?
No

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. **None**

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. **In preparation**

4.5 What social and economic benefits accrue to the local communities from the conservation of important waterbird sites? **None (presently)**

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.

No. Decision to allow or stop such activities is currently based on “precautionary principle”. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Ghana has draft sector specific EIA guidelines, including activities affecting natural environment, such as Protected Areas and Ramsar Site, Mining impacts, etc. The draft guidelines are awaiting adoption and implementation.

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.

Nothing of such policy exists in Ghana.

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.

Research priorities emanate from and/or identified by research institutions, including the universities and local NGOs. Lead implementing agencies of conventions, treaties, agreements, etc and some environmental NGO also propose research programmes and projects and may source research expertise, training and funding from national or International Corporation through the government. Some research needs are also identified through international programmes of study.

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 Ghana Wildlife Society, a local NGO, has established an on-going long term monthly bird census along the coast of Ghana.

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.

Few such programmes occurred in the 1990s and early 2000s between the Ghana Wildlife Society and International NGOs, specifically, the Wetlands International and BirdLife International.

6.2 What bilateral or multilateral co-operative action is your country undertaking to develop training programmes and share examples of good practice? None (presently)

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)?

Emanating from the national concerns and the vigorous public awareness creation on the menace of Avian Influenza, the government provided financial support for the National Inter-Ministerial Emergency Response Team on Avian Influenza in Ghana. The USAID supported the WD(FC) with the provision of logistics (mist nets, binoculars, wader boots, etc.) for field work in waterbirds monitoring and wetland conservation.

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

Ghana has strengthened the protection of her general wildlife resources through the introduction of innovative wildlife conservation strategies over the period. These include the revision of the entire Wildlife laws in the country, formulation and adoption of a *National Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2016)* and the development of the concept of *Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA)* where communities are empowered by devolution of responsibility in the management and sustainable utilization of all kinds of natural resources. Various donor and national government funded natural resources programmes have also focused on re-structuring of the sector Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) responsible for the natural resources management – wildlife and forestry.

Implementation arrangements for AEWA Action Plan are considered as an integral part of the National Wetlands Conservation effort.

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

- a. The Agreement Secretariat (fair contact)*
- b. International organisations (No contact)*
- c. AEWA NGO partners (Very little contact)*

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

The Action Plan may be well written and clearly express practical actions and guideline of implementation. However, using Ghana as an example, it may be of concern to note that most Africa AEWA Range States may lack the capacity and resources in training and information management, particularly, with regards to waterbirds species identification and conservation. There seem also to be general lack of interest among most local scientists, institutions and environmental NGOs in waterbirds conservation. There is therefore the need for better endowed AEWA NGO partners to reach out to support identifiable institutions and NGOs of the weaker Range States in training and capacity building.

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.

Ghana's planned actions for national implementation of the AEWA over the next three years (and beyond) is incorporated in a recently revised and adopted *National Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2016)*.

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
3. Management of human activities
4. Research and monitoring
5. Education and information

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

CREMA	Community Resource Management Areas
GWS	Ghana Wildlife Society – a local NGO
IBAs	Important Bird Areas
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
NBCS	National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
NWCSAP	National Wetlands Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (2007-2016)
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WD (FC)	Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission (Lead implementing agency of AEWA)

References

Fishpool, L. D. C. and Evans, M. I., eds. (2001) *Important Bird Areas in Africa and associated islands: Priority sites for conservation*. Newbury and Cambridge, UK: Pisces Publications and BirdLife International (BirdLife Conservation Series No. 11). Pg 367-389.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans **None**

Appendix 2: List of sites some of international importance and Ramsar Sites

Inland conservation areas	Type	Gazetted
Mole National Park	Woodland savannah	1971
Digya National Park	Transition zone	1971
Bui National Park	Woodland savannah	1971
Gbele National Park	Woodland savannah	1975
Ankasa/Nini Suhien National Park	Moist forest	1976
Kogyae Strict Nature Reserve	Moist forest	1971
Kyabobo National Park	Woodland savannah	In process
Kakum National Park/ Assin Attandanso Reserve	Moist forest	1991
Kalakpa Resource Reserve	Woodland savannah	1975
Bia National Park & Bia Resource Reserve	Moist forest	1974/7
Bomfobiri Wildlife Sanctuary	Forest	1975
Shai Hills Resource Reserve	Coastal savannah	1971
Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary	Inland Ramsar Wetland	1971
Boabeng-Fiema (community)	Forest	-
Agumatsa / Wli (community)	Forest	-
Densu Delta Ramsar Site	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999
Keta Lagoon Complex Ramsar Site	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999
Muni-Pomadze Ramsar Site	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999
Owabi Wildlife Sanctuary	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999
Sakumo Ramsar Site	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999
Songor Ramsar Site	Coastal Ramsar Site	1999

- Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance**
Management plans were prepared 7-17 years ago. There is the need to revise them.
- Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects**
Bird Census along the coast of Ghana by Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS)
- Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation**
Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission
Ghana Wildlife Society (GWS)
- Appendix 6: List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation**
Wildlife Division of the Forestry Commission – planned
Ghana Wildlife Society – planned
- Appendix 7: List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years** None