



FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES

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

Implementation during the period ...1.01.2006..... -1.01.2008

Contracting Party: LATVIA

Designated AEWA Administrative Authority: Ministry of Environment

Full name of the institution: Ministry of Environment

Name and title of the head of the institution: Guntis Pukitis, state secretary

Mailing address: Peldu Str. 25, Riga, LV-1083

Telephone: 371 67026524

Fax: 371 67820442

Email: pasts@vidm.gov.lv

Name and title (if different) of the designated contact officer for

AEWA matters: Vilnis Bernards

Mailing address for the designated contact officer:

Ministry of Environment

Peldu Str. 25 Riga, LV-1083

Telephone: 371 67026524

Fax: 371 67820442

Email: vilnis.bernards@vidm.gov.lv

Table of Contents

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation	5
2. Species conservation	6
Legal measures	6
Single Species Action Plans	7
Emergency measures	8
Re-establishments	8
Introductions	8
3. Habitat conservation	9
Habitat inventories	9
Conservation of areas	10
Rehabilitation and restoration	12
4. Management of human activities	13
Hunting	13
Eco-tourism	14
Other human activities	14
5. Research and monitoring	16
Status of research and monitoring programmes for species	16
6. Education and information	18
Training and development programmes	18
Raising public awareness	18
7. Final comments	19
8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties	20
9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions	
List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report	
References	
Appendices	
Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans	
Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance	
Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance	
Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects	
Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	

- Appendix 6: List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation 17
- Appendix 7: List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years 17

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

Summary of progress to date

This report for the forth Meeting of the Parties (MoP) covers the implementation period since AEWA enter in the force for Latvia 1 January 2006 till 1 January 2008. It provides information about Latvia initiatives and best practice in relation to the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their wetland habitats, in the context of the AEWA Action Plan. The report is based on information drawn from a wide range of organizations including: governmental agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Latvia has a comprehensive legal framework that provides for the conservation of species and habitats. There is considerable active conservation activity in the Latvia. In the last decade this has been particularly driven by the implementation of the EU Nature conservation legislation, Council Directive of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds and Natura 2000 network. Legal frameworks as well another activities including most successful nature conservation projects are described in the following sections of this report.

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

National Programme on Biological Diversity provides a framework for the domestic implementation of the Agreement over the next three years. The new Concept of Environmental Policy is being elaborated (planned to be adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers till the end of 2008) which will contain also chapter "Biodiversity conservation"

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

The main areas of activity are:

Participation in the NorBalWet regional initiative. Collaborating countries are: Scandinavian countries, Baltic States and Russia.

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?

Latvia has a wide range of strategies, policies and plans alongside a comprehensive legislative framework which affords statutory protection to all wild birds. These are used to deliver conservation objectives for species and habitats. Biodiversity conservation is achieved through partnerships between Government, NGOs and public participation. Latvia meets its obligations for the protection of endangered migratory waterbirds species through a comprehensive legal framework.

The Latvia's legal obligations under AEWA closely relate to existing obligations under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC). Domestic legislative mechanisms, as described above for the conservation of species, also provide for the conservation of land important to wildlife, establishing a national network of designated sites. Site-based mechanisms are supported by various wider countryside policies. Agri-environment schemes are one example of these wider policies. Latvia also has comprehensive regulations governing emissions to the air and freshwater, which have the potential to affect waterbirds.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

Government is responsible for the implementation of wildlife legislation. Ministry of Environment is responsible for the implementation of AEWA in close cooperation with State Forest Service and Nature Protection Board.

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

As a response to the 1992 CBD, Latvia developed the National Programme on Biological Diversity for the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources. The National Programme also contributes to the conservation of global biodiversity through appropriate mechanisms.

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)?

Taking of, and trade prohibitions implemented in accordance with EU Birds Directive 79/409 by Species and Habitats Protection Law.

b. Methods of taking?

The taking of strictly protected species is prohibited by Species and Habitats Protection Law. Exceptions from this prohibition can be granted in exceptional cases only in accordance with EU Birds Directive requirement. Taking methods of game species is regulated by Hunting Law and Hunting Regulations.

Legal restrictions on the modes of taking are aimed primarily at avoiding indiscriminate and non-selective kills. The use of traps, nets, bird lime, baits, gas, electricity, poisons and other stupefying substances, mechanically-propelled vehicles for immediate pursuit, motor boats, artificial light, bows and crossbows, Automatic and semi-automatic weapons (i.e. weapons that cannot fire more than three cartridges without reloading), night-vision devices are prohibited. Hunting with shotgun is only legal hunting method in Latvia. Shooting of flying birds is allowed only.

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?

There are no statutory limits established to the number of waterbirds that may be killed. Each hunter after hunting season should submit information on game bag to State Forest Service.

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

Anser albifrons albifrons included in the list of game species. Hunting season: 15 September-15 November. Traditional small scale hunting with short hunting season and small game bag.

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

Exemptions to the prohibitions laid down in paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3 are granted through specific licenses (single use permits) by the Nature Protection Board.

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?

Not proposed yet.

b. In preparation?

No action plans in preparation stage for moment.

c. Being implemented?

The species action plan for the Black Stork *Ciconia nigra* can be found on the Nature

protection Board website: <http://www.dap.gov.lv>

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.

In accordance with Hunting Regulations State Forest Service has a right to change hunting season for time period less than one month.

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 re-establishment projects during reporting period

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).

The introduction or relies in wild of nonnative species is prohibited by Species and Habitats Protection Law article 18.

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.

A comprehensive inventory of specially protected and potentially protected territories (including also territories with wetlands) in Latvia was carried out in 2001-2004 during the establishment of Natura 2000 network. In 2007 the additional inventories were carried out in the Ramsar site "Lubana Wetland Complex" and its surroundings in order to establish unified specially protected territory (according to the national legislation) around the Lubana lake (and including Lubana lake) according to the provisions of the European Commission. Inventories of some other Ramsar sites in Latvia (e.g. "Pape Wetland Complex" and "Ziemeļu purvi") as well as for other specially protected nature territories including wetland habitats were carried out during the elaboration of their nature conservation plans.

Natura 2000 inventory data is collected and stored in the database "Specially Protected Nature Territories", available on the web (www.lvgma.gov.lv) and updated by the State Agency "Latvian Environment, Geology and Meteorology Agency" (the institution subordinated to the Ministry of Environment).

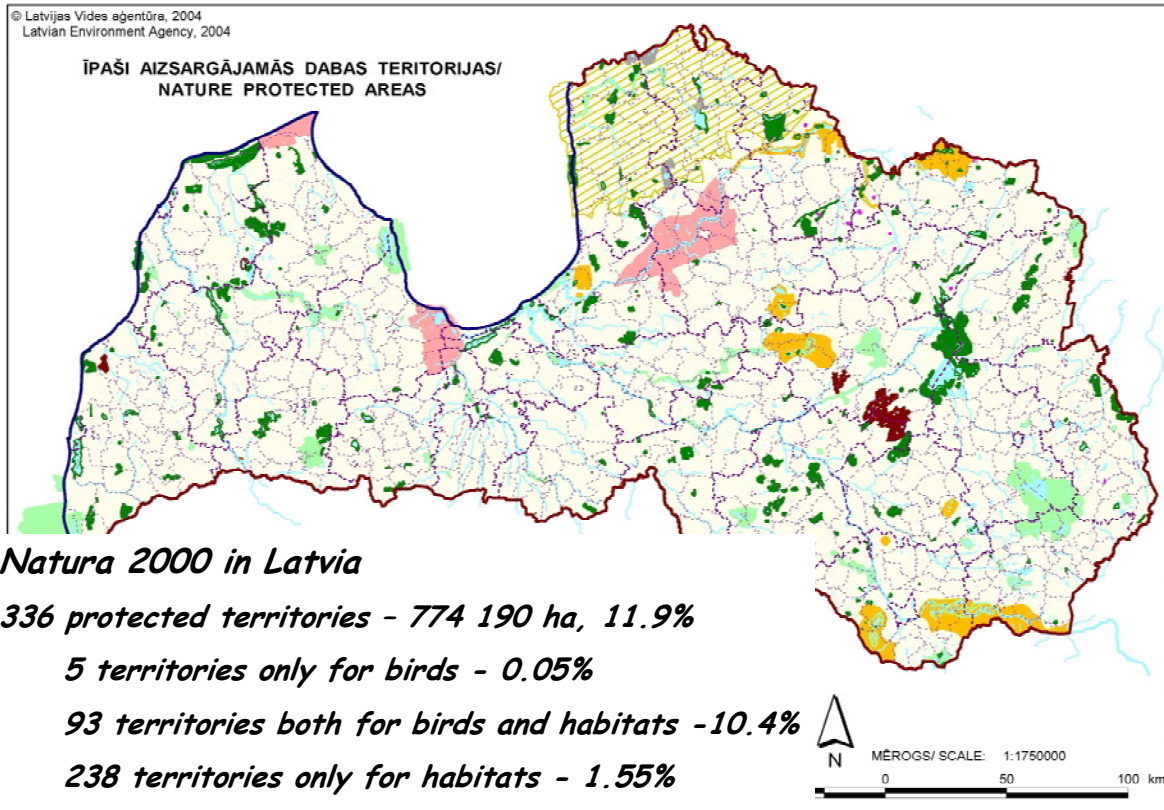
3.2 Has your country undertaken a strategic review of sites to develop a national network of important sites or areas for species covered by the Agreement? Please append a list of identified sites of international importance.

Strategic review of sites or areas for species covered by the Agreement as well as EU Birds and Habitats Directives was carried out in 2001-2004.

The protected areas are classified according following categories: strict nature reserves, nature parks, nature reserves, national parks, biosphere reserves, natural monuments, areas of protected landscapes.

Altogether in Latvia there are: 1 biosphere reserve, 3 national parks, 4 strict nature reserves, 9 areas of protected landscapes, 43 nature parks, 278 nature reserves, 206 geological and geomorphological formations with protectable qualities, 89 dendrological planted area. The most of these protected areas (336 area, that makes 11,9% of total country area) are established as Natura 2000 – protection areas of European level.

Important conservation tool outside Natura 2000 network is conservation with micro reserves. In the accordance with Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No 45 ‘‘On establishment, management and protection of Micro Reserves’’ (2001) More than 850 micro reserves were established for conservation of bird species.



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.)

Council Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) commonly known as the 'Birds Directive'. Article 4 requires Member States to establish Special Protection Areas where these are an appropriate means of conserving Annex I and/or migratory bird species. Council Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (92/43/EEC) commonly known as the 'Habitats Directive'. This requires Member States to establish Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for the conservation of habitats, plants and animals designated in Annex I and II of the Directive. Both Directives implemented by Law on Specially Protected Nature Areas.

Together those protected sites form part of the European Natura 2000 network.

The network of Natura 2000 sites in Latvia includes 336 territories – 4 nature reserves, 3 national parks, 250 restricted areas, 38 nature parks, 9 protected landscape areas, 9 nature monuments and 23 microreserves. They cover 11,9% of the whole area of the country.

List of all Natura 2000 sites including internationally important sites can be found on the Nature protection Board website: <http://www.dap.gov.lv>

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.

The management plans for specially protected territories are developed for a certain period of time (usually 7 -15 years) and they are approved by the Minister for Environment. The objective of the Nature protection plan is to coordinate the interests of nature protection, use of natural resources, regional development and other, at the same time ensuring the maintaining of the value of the region. The Nature protection plan states the nature protection and other essential activities, as well as the division of the territory into zones according to the protection and management requirements. The nature protection plans are obligatory for all levels of the planning of territory and its management.

The objective of the Nature Protection Board is to organize the development process of the nature protection plans and their implementation in the protected areas without their own administration bodies.

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?

18 nature protection plans in preparatory stage.

c. Being implemented?

32 nature protection plans adopted in 2006 and 19 plans in 2007.

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.

The best practices in Latvia so far is mainly related with implementation of different projects in Ramsar sites and other wetland areas aimed on restoration and management of different specially protected habitats (inter alia - wetland habitats) and species. Several such projects were successfully completed in the last triennium, but few projects are still ongoing. Accomplishment of the several large scale projects in Ramsar sites and other wetland areas, e.g. Lake Pape - Conservation, Preservation and Evolution (2003-2007), Management of Lubana Wetland Complex (2003-2007), Conservation of Wetlands in Kemeru National Park (2002-2006), Integrated Wetland and Forest Management in the Transboundary Area of North-Livonia (Estonia and Latvia) (2002-2006), ongoing projects, e.g. Restoration of Latvian Floodplains for EU Priority Species and Habitats (2004-2008), Implementation of Mire Habitat Management Plan for Latvia (2004-2008), "Tuned management and monitoring of the transboundary protected areas in North-Livonia as a support for local development" (2006-2008). Establishment of unified specially protected nature territory - nature reserve "Lubana wetland" - according to the national legislation is ongoing. Lubana wetland is designated as Ramsar site "Lubana wetland complex" and so far it consisted of 12 separate

nature reserves, but in future it is planned to unite all these nature reserves and additional territories in one nature reserve in order to facilitate better administration, conservation and management of this territory.

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.

Several large scale projects dealing with restoration of different wetland habitats are being or were done in Latvia:

Ongoing project "Restoration of Latvian Floodplains for EU Priority Species and Habitats (project targeted on restoration of floodplains in 16 territories in Latvia). The restoration measures carried out in 16 areas, covering approximately 2400 ha. This would prevent decline in existing bird populations (current estimate, all areas together: *Crex crex* 398-685 pairs, *Aquila pomarina* 21-29 pairs, *Gallinago media* 59-120 pairs).

Ongoing project Management of Lubana Wetland Complex cover 11 nationally protected areas, including 3 Important Bird Areas which occupy 65% of project area. The area maintains largest variety of wetlands: shallow freshwater lake of 8000 ha water surface, 7 raised and transitional bogs and fens 15 000 ha, grasslands, fish ponds and wet forests. It host internationally important bird species *Ciconia nigra*, *Haliaeetus albicilla*, *Aquila chrysaetos*, *Circaetus gallicus*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Larus minutus*, *Chlidonias niger*, *Gallinago media*, *Aquila clanga*, *Aquila pomarina*, *Crex crex*. Restoration activities include sluice restoration, dam building for bog water regime maintain, bush and grass removal, building of small island groups as well as restoration of river Pededze natural flow.

The project "Protection and management of the Northern Gauja valley" include in the activity list activities related to restoration of habitats important for water bird conservation, restoration of meadows and pastures in the area, mainly by cutting shrubs.

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).

All wild birds in Latvia are protected by statute. Cabinet of Ministers Regulations Nr. 760 (23 December 2003) Hunting Regulations list those which can be legally hunted and give details of relevant close seasons and other restrictions

Article 3.2. Hunting periods for following birds' species:

Scolopax rusticola –from 1 August till 15 November

Fulica atra, Anas crecca, Anas strepera, Anas clypeata, Anas platyrhynchos, Anas querquedula, Anas penelope, Anas acuta, Aythya fuligula, Aythya merula, Melanitta fusca, Melanitta nigra, Clangula hyemalis, Bucephala clangula - from second Saturday of August 16 p.m. till 15 September in Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday from 16 September till 15 November each day.

Anser fabalis, Anser albifrons, Branta canadensis – from 15 September till 15 November

Here is ban to use lead ammunition for waterbirds hunting in nature reserves and other protected nature areas, introduced by specific nature area individual use and management rules adopted by Cabinet of Ministers after negotiations with local municipalities and stakeholder groups. This ban covers all main waterbirds hunting areas, except part of Lubana Wetland Complex for which individual use and management rules not adopted yet.

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

In Latvia is statutory requirement for hunters to report information on the number of waterbirds shot during hunting season. Annual monitoring of the game bag is done by State Forest Service. Some information is conducted throughout the Laboratory of Ornithology specific waterbirds game bag census survey projects.

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 new hunters' education scheme was introduced in 2006. Hunters' examination procedure includes test on hunting legislation, game species biology and shooting test. Training course before exam is mandatory. Training course teaching hunters about shotguns, cartridges, shooting safety, the law, behavior in the field, quarry identification, different types of shotgun shooting and the role for gun dogs.

There is a range of education and training facilities covering all aspects of sporting shooting provided by voluntary shooting organisations, other concerned bodies.

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.

Several organizations provide information on sustainable and 'eco-tourism'. However, only a few are directly related to waterbirds. For example, Administrations of National Parks offers holidays and days out for those who are interested in bird-watching or wildlife, although some of the excursions offered are only available if accompanied by staff of administration. Bird-watching infrastructure (towers, wildlife trails) and visitor centers on several sites attract many local and overseas visitors

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

The socio-economic benefits of conservation activities to local communities will be the subject of future research.

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.

Environmental impact assessment is carried out in accordance with the provisions stipulated in the "Law on Environmental Impact Assessment" The Law incorporate legal provisions resulting from the EU Directives 85/337/EEC, 97/11/EC, 92/43/EEC, 2001/42/EC, 2003/35/EC and 92/43/EEC. Cabinet of Ministers Regulations determine order of EIA procedure.

In the accordance with Law on Specially Protected Nature Territories article 43 for an intended activity or planning document (except protected territory nature protection plans and the activities provided for therein, which are necessary for the management or renewal of specially protected species habitats, restricted use specially protected species habitats or specially protected biotopes), which separately or together with other intended activities or planning document may substantially affect a protected nature territory of European significance (*Natura 2000*) an environmental impact assessment shall be performed.

The intended activities shall be permitted to be performed or a planning document to be implemented if such activities do not negatively affect the ecological functions and integrity of the protected nature territory of European significance (*Natura 2000*) and do not contradict the goals of establishing and protection of such territory.

If the implementation of the intended activities or planning document negatively affects the protected nature territory of European significance (*Natura 2000*), the performance of the activities shall be permitted or the document implemented only in cases where such activities are the only solution and are necessary to satisfy significant interests, also social or economic interests, of the society.

If in the protected nature territory of European significance (*Natura 2000*) can be found European Union priority species or biotopes found in Latvia specified in regulatory enactments subsidiary to the Special and Biotope Protection Law, the intended activities

shall be permitted to be performed or a planning document to be implemented only in such cases where such activities are the only solution and are necessary for the health protection, security or environmental protection interests of the society.

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.

Here is legal requirement in conducting economic and territorial planning, land surveys and forest management, as well as all types of design works, the location of the protected territory, regulations for the protection and use thereof, as well as the nature protection plan shall be observed.

Good example of cooperation between land users and nature protection agencies is compensation system for land owners and permanent users of land caused by migratory and non-game species. Cabinet of Ministers Regulations No 778 ‘‘On compensation for significant damage for land users caused by specially protected non-game species and migratory species’’ provide possibility to receive compensation for damage. Damage mainly caused by cranes, goose, swans, cormorants.

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.

The most significant research project related to Agreement species during reporting period are:

Lesser spotted eagle and Black Stork migration telemetry research project. Research of Great Snipe and Corncrake in the frame of project "Restoration of Latvian Floodplains for EU Priority Species and Habitats (project targeted on restoration of floodplains in 16 territories in Latvia). Breeding ecology of ducks and larids research in Lake Engure.

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

Several monitoring activities were completed in the accordance with Latvia State Environmental Monitoring Program Biodiversity Monitoring Subprogram during last triennium:

Section Ramsar sites monitoring:

Survey of duck and wader nests on permanent study plots and following their fate till hatching or destruction and survey of nesting larids and mapping of colonies on whole Lake Engure, survey of aquatic invertebrates.

Section Mire monitoring:

Monitoring of birds was carried out in three sites (Lielais Kemeru tirelis, Ziemeļu Mire (Kodu-Kapzemes and Ollas mires) and Vasenieku Mire) and four transects were made.

Section Farmland monitoring:

Several monitoring works relevant to bird conservation had to be performed, such as monitoring of farmland birds and habitats, monitoring of grassland vegetation, monitoring of breeding success of the White Stork, monitoring of migrating cranes, geese and swans, monitoring of invertebrates, and assessment of the breeding population of White Stork.

Within the frame of monitoring of farmland birds and habitats, bird counts were performed twice in the breeding season in 40 permanent count points in each of the 6 complex monitoring stations (240 points altogether) using internationally approved counting methods. Habitat and landscape element description were made for the circle with 200 m radius around each of the bird count points.

Section Baltic Sea habitats and species monitoring:

Wintering waterfowl count was carried out, in total 42 coastal and 170 inland sites were checked.

Section Migratory birds monitoring:

It was eleventh cycle at Pape when monitoring of migrating birds was continued. Regular visual censuses of birds were carried out during April 4 to 28 at Kolka and the same at Pape from August 12 to November 25. Additionally low flying birds and nocturnal migrants were trapped and ringed at Pape from August 12 till November 15.

Data on numbers and migration phenology were obtained and analyzed from 26 priority as well as some another bird species.

Section endangered birds' species monitoring:

Monitoring of Great Snipe leks, Lesser Spotted Eagle and Black Stork.

The new State Environmental Monitoring program was adopted during reporting period.

Biodiversity Monitoring Sub-program consists of 3 segments: Special monitoring (includes White Stork, Black Stork, Lesser Spotted Eagle, larids, migratory bird species monitoring), Background monitoring (includes day and night birds monitoring) and Natura 2000 sites monitoring (includes nesting and migratory birds monitoring)

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.

Some training and education done during Life projects and in the frame of GEF/UNDP project Biodiversity Protection in North Vidzeme Biosphere Reserve

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

Good management practices are shared between different projects.

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)?

The Natural History Museum of Latvia gathers and maintains collections of natural specimens from Latvia and the world, does scientific research on the collections and popularizes them in permanent and temporary exhibits and other display activities. The museum takes advantage of its collection in its environmental education work. It participates in environmental research and protection and gathers extensive new materials and information about the diversity of nature in Latvia and the world. Several research (satellite telemetry of *Cygnus cygnus*) and public activities support waterbird and wetland conservation (Ramsar day celebration, Environmental Interpretaters Service, etc.) Magazine "Putni dabā" ("Birds in Nature") is issued by Latvian Ornithological Society (LOB) four times a year. It contains not only different information about birds, but also about environmental problems in general. For example, about logging, environment-friendly farming etc. Bird's watchers tournament "Tornu cinas" organized by LOB traditionally attracts interest of press and general public.

Public awareness rise is integral part of several Life Nature projects as well other project involving together experts and general public.

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

The secretariat's active development of the Agreement over the first years since its entry into force has been impressive. It will be important to maintain a high awareness of AEWA activities not only within government agencies but also much more widely within the region. The further development and renewal of the Agreement's web-site will facilitate the exchange of information and good practice within AEWA and at the same time developing greater awareness of activities being undertaken under the aegis of the Agreement.

b. International organisations

c. AEWA NGO partners

The international NGO partners currently contribute significantly to the work of implementing AEWA. Their close involvement in delivering elements of the Implementation Plan has been notable. There would be significant benefits from a more focussed collective delivery of waterbird and wetland monitoring in future. Here, the NGOs with their extensive networks in many countries potentially have much to deliver that could give major conservation benefits.

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

There is scope in the implementation of AEWA to develop close linkages and synergies with aspects of other conventions, particularly, but not restricted to, the Ramsar Convention, the CBD, the CMS, Bern Convention and the European Union Birds Directive. All opportunities to develop such linkages and synergies between treaties should be explored so as to ensure that scarce conservation resources throughout the region are devoted primarily to implementation and practical conservation activity, and not into unnecessary bureaucracy and duplication.

There is generally scope for much closer co-operation between the treaties indicated. Thus, the Ornis Committee of the Birds Directive has developed action plans for a number of quarry species of waterbirds with unfavourable conservation status in the EU. Although these have yet to be implemented, there is significant potential for collaboration in their development for the whole of the relevant biogeographical populations.

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.

References

Appendices

Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans

Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

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

Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

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

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

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