



FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES

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

National Report of Lebanon to be submitted to MOP4

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1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

Summary of progress to date

The Government of Lebanon ratified the AEWA agreement in 2002, this was followed by an initiation and familiarization period during which the Ministry of Environment has had to gain increased understanding of the agreement, its obligations and Action Plan.

Over the past few years, Lebanon has moved forward in the implementation of the Plan of Action of the AEWA agreement, by undertaking measures to respond to the actions specified. In order to achieve this, the responsible agency, the Ministry of Environment, has chosen to establish partnerships with specialized organizations in an effort to harness national capacities for the fulfillment of its obligations.

In terms of legal and policy measures, several laws and decisions have been proposed to the Council of Ministers as a way to mitigate impacts on biodiversity including migrating water birds and their habitats. General legal and policy measures relate to the issuance of a Code of the Environment, of a Framework Law for the organization of hunting, of drafting a Framework Law on Protected Areas and of the drafting of decrees related to impact assessment.

Additionally, the Ministry of Environment has collaborated with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) "a local NGO" to submit a proposal to the GEF for the protection of migratory soaring birds along their flyways. In 2004, the PDF-B component included threat analysis that has aimed at identifying key sectoral threats to these birds, namely Hunting, Agriculture and Energy. The full regional project "Mainstreaming Conservation of Migratory Soaring Birds into Key productive sectors along the Rift Valley/Red Sea flyways" was approved by the GEF for funding in 2007 and will be executed for a period of five years, starting from September-October 2008. At regional level, the project will be implemented by Birdlife International, in Lebanon the implementation will start in September 2008 and will be executed by SPNL and UNDP.

The full project aim to make the flyway system (its communities, planning authorities, land-use systems) 'soaring bird friendly', thereby ensuring safe passage between breeding and non-breeding grounds. The project seeks to achieve its objectives by addressing the underlying causes of the threats that affect soaring birds' diversity within the flyway – the 'barriers' to soaring bird conservation. Birds may be in danger of being killed throughout the flyway, and the project will take a 'flyway system' approach, targeting its efforts and resources at issues and localities where dangers are highest. The dangers are particularly acute at the 'bottlenecks' where bird densities are regularly (and predictably) high, or where birds land or fly close to the ground. Threats to birds within the flyway system may be really local in nature and need to be addressed at that level (i.e. Site-based action at bottlenecks). Others may be national, regional, or sector-specific in nature and action will most effectively take the form of effective dialogue, awareness raising, stakeholder participation, and incentives for sustainable management backed by a mix of measures underpinning the policy, legal and legislative foundation for making the flyway safe for soaring migratory birds.

The Ministry of Environment has also endorsed the Important Bird Areas concept, consequently a national inventory of IBAs was conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha Lebanon, two national conservation NGOs. The inventory was finalized in 2007 and has identified 42 sites important for the conservation of migratory water birds, among which Birdlife International has classified 10 new sites as IBAs thus increasing the numbers of IBAs in Lebanon from 4 till 14.

Despite noticeable improvements, the national capacity remains relatively low in order to meaningfully advance the implementation of the agreement and its plan of action. One of the main constraints remains the limited availability of professionals and funding for fundamental and applied research related to the monitoring of water birds and their habitats. Species specific action plans is one of the key areas where little work has been done as a result of the above. However, bird ringing is being conducted on regular basis in Aamiq wetland by A Rocha and in Arz el Shouf Cedars nature reserve by Arz el Shouf Reserve management team .

In terms of site management and the encouragement of eco-tourism as a source of funding for conservation efforts, the Ministry of Environment has developed a strategy for increasing the number of protected areas and improving their management. Management plans have been developed for three Ramsar sites known for their importance for water birds, and bird monitoring has been effectively undertaken at one of these sites.

In terms of awareness-raising and ecotourism, the 10th anniversary of AEWA was celebrated at a potential wetland IBA under the aegis of the Ministries of Environment and Tourism. Lead by SPNL, the event was a festival that gathered 550 children from 14 different public schools, 10 municipalities and 3 members of Parliament. The 11th anniversary of AEWA was also celebrated in a declared IBA "Kfar Zabad" located in Anjar in the region of Bekaa; the event was organized by SPNL in collaboration with the local community. The festival included distribution of booklets to schools.

In 2005, due to the increased weariness regarding the contamination from wild birds carrying avian influenza virus, a strict ban on hunting on all the Lebanese territory has been issued by the ministry of Environment and has triggered increased interest in the development of a proper monitoring strategy for migratory birds and the sites they rely on. These include:

- Notification # 1/24 dated 14 October 2005 issued by the Minister of Environment banning hunting on all Lebanese territory in all times.
- Notification # 1/2 dated 25 January 2006 issued by the Minister of Environment reminding all the citizens of the previous notification # 1/24 dated 14 October 2005 and the necessity to comply with it.

Knowing that, hunting is still banned officially until present.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Agriculture has taken many measures to prevent the spreading of Avian Influenza Virus.

After the issuance of the Hunting Law (# 528 dated: 25/2/04), two decrees were issued in 2006 regarding the Higher Council for Hunting (HCH) that was established through the Hunting law:

- Decree number 17454 dated 15 July 2006 which designates the representatives of institutions and organizations in the Higher Council of Hunting.
- Decree number 17455 dated 15 July 2006 which defines the internal structure of the Higher Council of Hunting.

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

-Starting the work of the Higher Council for Hunting (HCH) that will act as the main body for the preparation of the implementation decrees for the Hunting Law (Law #528, February 2004) in Lebanon. In addition, the HCH will propose the Ministerial Decisions to be issued by the Minister of Environment: these include the specification of game birds, protected species, hunting seasons, and hunting sites.

-Once the implementation decrees and decisions are issued, the implementation of the Hunting Law will start with specific care given to the provisions related to the training of hunters and of law enforcement officers, development of the permitting system, raising national awareness of the importance of birds and developing and implementing an annual tracking system for the determination of game population changes, in addition to considerations related to hunting practices and their monitoring.

-Follow-up the issuance of the Framework Law for Protected Areas that will result in the establishment of new protected areas in Lebanon some of which might be of importance for migratory water birds.

-Strengthening the management of protected areas, specifically for IBAs, in relation to their management and conservation. Updating the old management plans for some sites and implementing the newly developed management plans for other sites.

-Issuing decrees for the application of impact assessment (EIA & SEA) which will cover biodiversity important areas and wetlands taking in due consideration the requirements of migrating populations.

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

Undertaking a national inventory of wetlands and key biodiversity sites that will complement the IBA inventory that was conducted and finalized in 2007.

Building national capacity for the development and implementation of monitoring programmes of species and habitats.

Placing Lebanon on the international map of bird watching activities as a trigger to enhance conservation values of birds and national efforts for their protection.

Phasing out the use of lead shots and cartridges in hunting in Lebanon.

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?

a. The Hunting law # 580 issued in 2004 regulates hunting practices and integrates sustainable hunting in Lebanon. This law established a "Higher Council of Hunting"(HCH) headed by the Ministry of Environment and including representatives of line ministers, conservation NGOs, and hunting organizations.

The law stipulates that decisions are to be issued by the Minister of Environment upon suggestion from the "Higher Council of Hunting" (HCH) or after its consultation for defining hunting season and its location, animals and birds species that must be protected and prohibited for hunting as well as animal and birds species permitted for hunting. However this law is not implemented yet since it requires the initiation of the HCH work and the issuance of the law's implementation decrees.

SEA and EIA decrees have been drafted and proposed to the Council of Ministers, which include special considerations for the conservation of biodiversity in general, including birds and their habitats. A manual has been developed through an EC-Life funded project for mainstreaming biodiversity into Impact Assessment studies as a guidance tool for policy makers and practitioners. The development of this manual was funded by the International Association on Impact Assessment – Capacity Building for Biodiversity in Impact Assessment programme

The full project on "Conservation of soaring migratory birds in the eastern sector of the Africa-Eurasia flyway system(Rift Valley and Red Sea flyways)" was approved by the GEF/UNDP and will start in September 2008, it aims at alleviating the pressures and threats on sectoral policies impacting the conservation of migratory birds and at mainstreaming bird conservation in these different sector and will incorporate biodiversity priorities into the policies, strategies, legal frameworks, decisions and actions of the full-range of players in these sectors.

A draft Protected Areas framework law has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment as a means to ensure the systematic protection of key habitats. This law has provided an effective management outlook based on sustainable human development's viable economic activities.

A paper entitled "Towards a National Wetlands Policy in Lebanon: A background paper" has been prepared under the guidance of the Ministry of Environment with funding from the UNDP country programme, and another one entitled " Conservation needs for Mediterranean wetlands" within the "Stable Institutional Structure for Protected Areas Management" project.(SISPAM) funded by the EC-Life and executed by MoE and UNDP.

A Code of the Environment, also referred to as Law 444, was voted by the parliament,

aiming to provide a general framework for environmental management and conservation in Lebanon. It includes a specific article related to the conservation of biodiversity.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

Depending on the policies and legal instruments, different entities are responsible for the implementation of the specific legislative and policy statements.

Regarding the regulation of hunting, the Higher Council of Hunting (HCH), headed by the Ministry of Environment, is responsible for drafting and suggesting all decrees and legislation regarding the application of the law. The Minister of Environment is responsible of the issuance of decisions defining hunting seasons and species after consulting the Higher Council of Hunting. The HCH includes representative from the following ministries and institutions: Environment, Justice, Agriculture, Interior and Municipalities, National Defense, Finance, National Council for Scientific Research, the National Society for Wild Hunting, a bird and mammal specialist, a representative of the Syndicate of Hunting Weapons and Ammunitions, Lebanese Federation for Shooting and Hunting, and national environmental organizations. All members of the Council are volunteers who work for free. Personnel from the Ministry of Environment – Protected Areas Guards; Ministry of Agriculture – Forest guards; Ministry of Interior – Internal Security Forces; are responsible for the monitoring of hunting's violations laws and issuance of fines to ensure the proper enforcement of the law.

Regarding SEA and EIA, the Ministry of Environment is the lead organization responsible for reviewing submitted impact assessment studies.

Regarding protected areas management, the Ministry of Environment is the key responsible institution for the designation, supervision of management and monitoring of progress.

Concerning IBAs, some of them are protected with the help of NGOs and others in collaboration with local citizens and municipalities. Nature reserves that are declared IBAs are managed by the Ministry of Environment and local communities.

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

The management plans for protected sites including wetlands pinpoint the need for the conservation of key species.

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 hunting law organizes hunting practices in general without defining species. Species will be defined in the Ministerial Decisions that will be issued by the Minister of Environment

upon suggestion from the the Higher Council on Hunting (HCH).

Taking of and trade in birds are not allowed according to article 10 of the hunting law: It is prohibited in any season to snatch nests ,destroy, sell, transport, grab, or hurt eggs, of chicks, or juveniles of wild bird or animal. It is also prohibited to export eggs or chicks of all bird's species and animals (except for the wild birds and animals that are bred in farms) as well as young of furred animals, and it is forbidden to cage wild chukkars.

As for scientific researchers, they are allowed to capture animals or birds for research purposes on the condition to release them back later alive and unharmed, scientists are allowed as well to take eggs for research purpose. In this regards, researchers should obtain a special license upon an application submitted to the National Center for Scientific Research.

In the new draft Protected Areas Framework law, there is an article that bans taking and introducing anything from and to the nature reserve

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?

The Hunting law stipulates that decisions are to be issued by the Minister of Environment upon suggestion from the “Higher Council of Hunting” (HCH), that:

- Define the birds and animals classified as hunting preys, whereby hunting them is allowed during specific times which would be defined.
- Prohibit whether on a temporary or permanent basis: the hunting of all birds or animals that demonstrate benefits to the agriculture and ecological balance, or the rare species for the purpose of increasing their numbers, or the species classified as globally endangered as per the international Conventions and Agreements ratified by Lebanon including those listed in the IUCN Red List; and specify the areas and the periods in which hunting is prohibited within the calendar year

The list of the mentioned species is to be defined in Ministerial Decisions once the HCH becomes operational.

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

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?

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.)

No plans were prepared.

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.

Regional cooperation related to conservation of bird species in general but not specifically for developing and implementing emergency issues is being performed through the execution of regional projects:

- The “Conservation of soaring migratory birds in the eastern sector of the Africa-Eurasia flyway system(Rift Valley an Red Sea flyways)” project executed by Birdlife international in partnership with national NGOs partners and government agencies in Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian authority, Saudi Arabia, Susan, Syria and Yemen. The Project Development Funds (PDF-B) Phase funded by the GEF was executed during the year 2005-2006. The regional part was implemented by the Middle East and North Africa Coordination office of Birdlife International in Jordan. In Lebanon, the national part was executed by SPNL which is the birdlife partner in Lebanon. The countries covered by the project were selected where birds are subjected to threats within their flyway system. Those threats may be local, national or regional. During the PDF phase, actions most effectively took the form of effective dialogue, awareness raising, stakeholder participation and incentives for sustainable management backed by a mix of measures underpinning the policy and legislative foundation for making flyway safe for soaring migratory birds. The full project was approved for funding by the GEF and its implementation will start in September 2008 and will be performed during a period of 5 years. It will be implemented by Birdlife International at regional level and in Lebanon by SPNL, UNDP country office with local partners and the MoA. The full project’s main objective is to make the flyway system of soaring migratory birds (its communities, planning authorities, land-use systems) 'soaring bird friendly', thereby ensuring safe passage between breeding and non-breeding grounds.
- The Sustainable hunting project entitled “Building capacity for sustainable hunting of migratory birds in Mediterranean countries of North Africa and Middle East” is related to the management of birds hunting in selected North Africa and Middle East countries and was executed from 2005 till 2007. The initiative was executed by BirdLife in partnership with SPNL in Lebanon which is responsible for the Middle East countries and “Les Amis des Oiseaux” association in Tunisia which is responsible for the North African countries. The project is funded by the European Union – LIFE Third Countries Fund. Additional funds have been insured by Vogelbescherming Nederland and the GEF.

After review of information on hunting of migratory birds, the project has developed a model for a more responsible and sustainable approach to the hunting of migratory birds in the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean. Other activities include the promotion of

sustainable hunting behavior development and enforcement of hunting legislation.

The main outputs generated through the Sustainable Hunting Project:

1. Review of information on hunting of migratory birds
 2. Guidelines for Sustainable Hunting of Migratory Birds
 3. Promotion of sustainable hunting behavior
 4. Improving public awareness
 5. Trainings on conflicts resolution
 - 6 Building partnerships
 7. Strengthening co-operation and compliance with international agreements
- SPNL in partnership with RSCN-Birdlife partner in Jordan and the MedWet Secretariat has implemented a twinning project during 2007, funded by the European Commission, DG-Environment entitled "Twinning of MedWet with SPNL and RSCN for capacity building". The TwinMed project's main purpose was to create twinning partnerships between the EU-based mentoring NGO, MedWet, and the two NGOs from non-EU Mediterranean countries, SPNL from Lebanon and RSCN from Jordan. Through these twinning partnerships, the goal of the project was to transfer expertise from MedWet towards the targeted NGOs, for enhancing their capacity and effectiveness in wetland conservation.

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.

None undertaken, no plans prepared.

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).

Article 4 in the hunting law allows the establishment of centers to raise various wild birds and animals species on the condition that these species are local or migrants especially those that are globally threatened, for the reason of increasing their numbers and then releasing them back to the wild for the sake of the biodiversity and environmental balance. Relevant organizations are mandated for this matter. However, the details of this article require the issuance of an application decree, which is pending the initiation of the work of the Higher Council on Hunting and the completion of the necessary studies.

Forest protection law (No. 558 dated 24/7/1996) states in article 16 that the introduction of any non native animals or birds into a protected forest is prohibited.

In the new draft Protected Areas Framework law, there is an article that bans taking and introducing anything from and to the nature reserve.

3. Habitat conservation

Habitat inventories

- With funding from the Council for Development and Reconstruction – CDR, a National Land Use Plan (Schéma Directeur d'Aménagement du Territoire Libanais) has been prepared by two urban planning consultancy firms (Dar al Handassah and IAURIF). This plan takes into account considerations for the protection and maintenance of significant natural and semi-natural habitats important for their contribution to biodiversity conservation. It is planned to be endorsed by the Council of Ministers as a guiding document for future local development plans..
- The first national inventory of Important Bird Areas was conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha, two NGOs, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Environment. This initiative was funded by the MAVA foundation, and finalized in 2007. This inventory has identified 42 new sites as potential IBAs, including several wetlands and coastal areas, 10 of which were declared as IBAs by BirdLife international as follows:

Five sites declared in 2006 :

1. Kfar Zabad –Anjar
2. Qaraoun Lake
3. Qaa el Rim-Sannine
4. Tannourine Nature Reserve
5. Ebel El Saqi

Two site declared in 2007:

1. Al Mjar Ras Baalbeck
- 2- BEIRUT RIVER

Three sites declared in 2008:

1. Bentael Nature Reserve
2. Ramlieh
3. Upper Mountains of Akkar Donnieh (Fnaideq Forest, Mechmech, Qammouaa, Wadi Jouhanam)

This has increased the numbers of IBAs in Lebanon from 4 to 14 since since four sites were already declared by BirdLife international as IBAs in 1994 (Aammiq Wetland, Al-Chouf Cedars Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve and Palms Islands Nature Reserve)

- In Lebanon there are 7 sites declared as Nature Reserves (6 are protected by law and one by ministerial decision) five of which are IBAs and two of these five are also Ramsar sites.
- Individual researchers from academic and research institutions are also working on the monitoring of sites and flyways, and the results of their findings are usually presented in the form of scientific publications in specialized journals.

Given its limited technical and field capacity, the Ministry of Environment relies on the

results of such inventories and research to determine priority sites for international designation and national conservation efforts.

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.

The first national inventory of Important Bird Areas in Lebanon conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha, two NGOs, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Environment was finalized in 2007 and identified 42 new sites as potential IBAs, including several wetlands and coastal areas, 10 of which were declared as new IBAs by BirdLife international, knowing that four sites in Lebanon were already declared as IBAs previously:

The total sites of Lebanon declared as IBAs by Birdlife International, are the following:

- 1- Al Mjar - Ras Baalbek
- 2- Ammiq wetland
- 3- Beirut River Valley
- 4- Bentaël Nature Reserve
- 5- Chouf Cedars Nature Reserve
- 6- Ebel El Saqi
- 7- Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve
- 8- Kfar Zabad – Anjar
- 9- Palm Islands Nature Reserve
- 10- Qaraoun Lake
- 11- Ramlieh
- 12- Tannourine Nature Reserve
- 13- Upper Mountains of Akkar Donnieh (Fnaideq Forest, Mechmech, Qammouaa, Wadi Jouhanam)
- 14- Qaa El Rim- Sannine

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.

Not undertaken.

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.)

Protected Areas are usually declared by the issuance of a national law voted by the parliament proposed by the Ministry of Environment. Some sites are protected by the issuance of ministerial decisions by the Minister of Environment.

Palm island nature reserve, Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, Bentaël Nature Reserve, Tannourine Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve, Arz el Chouf Nature Reserve and Yammouneh Nature Reserve are protected by law. Karm Chbat is protected by a ministerial decision.

In the case of privately-owned land – such as in the case of the Ammik wetland IBAs, a legal agreement between the Government and the landowners is going to be developed for the co-management of the site.

There is a new draft Framework law for Protected Areas prepared by the MoE that will be issued soon. This law includes new proposed method for establishing nature reserves through the issuance of a decree by the Council of Ministries upon suggestion of the Ministry of Environment in addition it provided a mechanism for installing conservation management on private lands.

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.

Management plans were developed by the Ministry of environment for the following sites: Al Shouf Cedars Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve, Palms islands Nature Reserves, Aamiq Wetland, Tyre Coast Nature Reserve and Tannourine Cedars Nature Reserve, each site with national recognition or international designations. Trainings on management planning have been undertaken by the Ministry of Environment, targeting management bodies of protected areas and sites.

Management planning is usually undertaken by the Ministry of Environment and the management bodies of the site, which consist of either volunteer Appointed Protected Area Committees "APAC" and professional Management Teams. During the development of management plans, international expertise is sought from specialized organizations in such matters, such as IUCN or Tour du Valat. In addition, management planning is undertaken in a participatory manner, where stakeholder input is required and the final document is officially endorsed by the Minister of Environment.

The very first management plans were finalized in 2000 for Al Shouf Cedars Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve and Palm Island Nature Reserve and were mainly aimed towards conservation efforts as a main goal.

The latest versions of management plans which were prepared for two wetlands sites (Aamiq Wetland and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve) in 2005 and a Cedar Reserve (Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve) in 2007, have evolved towards more comprehensive documents with impact indicators and time-bound objectives.

The Lebanese Ministry of Environment is the tutelage body for the management of all Nature Reserves in Lebanon. The local management bodies mentioned above are responsible for the implementation of the activities of the management plans under the supervision of the Ministry of Environment. Some activities can be implemented by specialized organizations such as NGOs or private sector organizations when the skills are not available within the local management body.

Objectives of each site's newly prepared management plans and the bodies responsible for its preparation and implementation are as follows:

1) Tyre coast nature reserve:

1. Habitat management
2. Species management
3. Education, interpretation and communication
4. Research and monitoring
5. Public use, recreation and visitor facility

Organizations that are mainly responsible for the direct management of the site, including the preparation and the approval of the management plan are:

- Ministry of Environment (approval of the management plan and over all supervision of the site)
- MedWetCoast projectas under the execution of the MoE and UNDP funded by the GEF (preparation of the management plan)
- Appointed Protected Area Committee (APAC) (Contribution in the preparationof the management plan, direct local management of the site under the supervision of the ministry of environment)
- Tyre municipality (management of the touristic section of the reserve after the approval of the APAC and the MoE)

2) Ammiq Wetland:

1. Species Management
2. Habitat management
3. Awareness
4. Visitors/tourism
5. Local community
6. Estate management

Organizations responsible of the implementation of the management plan:

Ministry of environment, Landowners, Local youth clubs/NGOs, Wetland manager, Scientist, Guards, Administrative assistance, Agriculture engineer, Awareness Staff, Guides.

3) Tannourine Cedar Forest Nature Reserve

1. Species and habitat conservation
2. Sustainable resource utilization
3. Visitor/Tourism
4. Local Community
5. Administration
6. Awareness

Organizations responsible of the implementation of the management plan:

Ministry of Environment:

- Overall supervision of all activities undertaken within the reserve:
- Tutelage body whose main responsibility is to make sure management plans are duly implemented in addition to authorizing contracts.
- Providing annual financial support and auditing expenses is the core part of the MoE in PA management
- Provide support role for the conservation efforts on site
- Provide a protection role for the site on a national level
- Provide annual financial support for the management and auditing expenses

APAC:

Forms the link between the MoE and the MT. The legal mandate of the APAC according to its Terms of Reference specified by Ministerial Decision includes administrative, supervisory and financial responsibilities.

- Supervises the work of the MT
- Ensures the proper implementation of the management plan and the budget
- Reports regularly to the MoE
- Investigates any damage that befalls on the reserve and legally pursue the responsible party
- Appoint guards trained to maintain and protect the area
- Raising public awareness
- Managing the needs of the reserve and all financial matters.
- Responsible for decision-making and achieving the objectives of the management of the site by forming the link between the MoE and the MT
- Supervises the work of the MT and ensures the proper implementation of the management plan and the budget
- Reports regularly to the MoE

Site Manager:

Conserving the biological diversity in the Nature Reserve and ensuring its sustainability:

- Ensure social, scientific and security relationship with all concerned stakeholders
- Train remaining team on security actions and provide them with the necessary guidance and plans
- Prepare all required reporting and documentation to MoE and APAC
- Develop the annual work plans and coordinate with the APAC and MoE in setting the management plans, policies and strategies
- Execute the annual work plans and management plan in cooperation with the MT
- Identify existing and potential problems and implement the appropriate actions to solve or prevent them based on suitable scientific analysis
- Monitor the biological diversity and the socio-economic status • Attend all meetings and workshops suggested by the APAC and MoE
- Hold meetings with all the concerned stakeholders
- Collaborate and network with environmental organizations (local or international)
- Mobilize financial resources
- Supervise all projects ongoing within the reserve
- Raise awareness and promote the site
- Participate in trainings and capacity building
- Gather and update information database
- Supervise and follow up of the work of the MT
- Accompany all researchers, scientists, volunteers on site and provide them with the necessary information

Ensure full time management and day- to-day operations of the site

- Report monthly to MoE and APAC. Report should be drafted in collaboration with MT members and should include detailed activity report, progress of work, new activities suggested, expectations and suggestions, updated annual work plan and annual budget modification if requested.
- Make contacts with services and user organizations (academics, associations, administrations)
- Evaluate the means needed to implement the different operations

- Seek support on project basis from national and international sources through carrying out plans and campaigns, manage the grants awarded, and inform APAC on follow-up requirements
- Submit annual budgets and work plan to APAC
- Participate in colloquia and seminars
- Coordinate with international experts assigned to supervise the implementation and modifications with a yearly follow-up
- Ensure the external representation and relations with respect to partner institutions, financial backers, and networks as delegated by the members of the APAC.

Guard/Ranger:

Conserving the biological diversity in the Nature Reserve and ensuring its sustainability:

- Ensure social, scientific and security relationship with all concerned stakeholders
- Continuous field visits to the Nature Reserve, assuring that things are going in good manner, in spring, summer and fall...
- Patrol all human, biological aspects of the reserve
- Take legal action against those who are not abiding by the rules
- Inform those who are higher rank of all violations
- Accompany all researchers, scientists, volunteers on site
- Attend workshop and training courses that the manager suggests and sees necessary and beneficial
- Gather, update and organize information database
- Monitor the biological diversity and the socio-economic status
- Supervise all site cleaning activities and participate in all the cleaning campaigns organized by the Nature Reserve
- Keep a daily record of all site events, changes and violations
- Conduct a quarterly report to manager
- Conduct an annual report for the site manager, MoE and APAC
- Carry out management operations, such as maintaining paths, mowing, fencing, fighting against plant pests, installing signs, etc.
- Protect the Nature Reserve on an hourly basis, and monitor its wild life.
- Maintain and repair installations needed for specific sites or species: clearing brush, building fences, enhancing the site, maintaining the parking areas and the paths
- Eye watching the sites: report infractions, anomalies, damage to nature, and new human activities
- Prevent the entrance of animals, bicycles... (Depending on the zoning and their regulations)
- Prevent cutting trees
- Prevent unorganized grazing
- Supervise the application of all regulations
- Implement all legal procedures against those who are not abiding by the rules
- Inform and sensitize the visitors so they respect the regulations
- Participate in welcoming the public and if needed lead guided visits.
- Inform site manager with all violations that take place
- Perform regular meeting with the site manager to inform on PA status

Guide:

Responsibilities Starting 2007:

Receive visitors and provide them with information bulletins

- Lead the guided visits
- Participate in public awareness events

- Inform and sensitize the visitors so they respect the regulations
- Organize the welcoming area
- Sell handicraft and handmade rural products
- Participate in workshops

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?***

Al Chouf Cedars Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve, Palms Islands Nature Reserves had formal management plans that was developed in year 2000 and implemented till 2005 and needs to be updated. The management plan of the Palms Islands Nature Reserve will be updated through funds from the Ministry of Environment in 2009. A new proposal for providing support to Nature Reserves including developing and updating management plans is under discussion between MoE and FFEM.

Management plans for two wetland sites of importance for migratory water birds were developed in 2005 in addition to a management plan for a Cedar Nature Reserve prepared in 2007 and are implemented:

1. Ammiq Wetland
2. Tyre Coast Nature reserve
3. Tannourine Cedar Forest Nature reserve

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.

-A project has been implemented in Palm Islands nature Reserve (PINR) since 2006 aiming at assessing the effect of the oil spill (that occurred during the Israeli attack on Lebanon in July 2006) in the biophysical environment of the islands through conducting terrestrial and marine surveys with ecotoxicological laboratory analysis.

The project is co-managed by the Lebanese Ministry of Environment (MoE) and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation and technically supported by the American University in Beirut and the IUCN Mediterranean Marine Program.

The project resulted in the development of a short, medium, and long term monitoring plan of indicator/ key species and physical parameters of PINR based on the information collected in the biodiversity survey and pollution assessment. Identify further research/work priorities based on field work.

-The Ministry of Environment signed in 2007 a MoU with the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) which is now under implementation for the removal of oil contamination that remains in Palm Islands Nature Reserve resulting from 2006 conflict as well as implementing a monitoring program for the marine part of the reserve.

- Organic farming is initiated in Tyre Coast Nature Reserve.
- Uncontrolled public access to conserved zones are reduced through fencing and guarding.
- Grazing on Ammiq wetland is controlled in terms of seasons, numbers and location
- In an effort to improve pollution control, the Ministry of Environment has issued a decision # 90/1 dated 16/11/2000 identifying the “Environmental Guidelines for the Permits of Residential Buildings within Basins of Rivers that are under the Protection of the Ministry of Environment” which includes guidelines for management of waste water, solid waste and air pollution. In addition, several studies on water bodies have been undertaken, including water budgeting, the 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.

For the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, proposed rehabilitation and restoration projects and initiatives as listed in the management plan are the following:

Operational objective 3: To Restore and rehabilitate the cultural value of Raas el Ain Area in TCNR

Project 3.1: Restore and rehabilitate the artesian wells and the surrounding Area

- Develop a complete historical study and literature review of the site
- Restore and Rehabilitate the Mill house in Raas el Ain into a visitor center.
- Remove all illegal housing in the Area.
- Develop landscape master plan for the reserve including the ecological archeological and environmental significance of the site.
- Implement the master plan
- Develop an administrative coordination mechanism among all the stakeholders concerned with Raas el ain (i.e Water department of the South, department of Antiquities, Litani Water Authority, Council for Development and Reconstruction, Ministry of Environment and the APAC)

Project 3.2 : Create facilities to host tourists in Rass el Ain.

- Instal proper infrastructure to promote conservation of TCNR and improve accessibility
- Restore and rehabilitate the Mill house into a visitor center.
- Develop an ecological museum highlighting the natural significance of the site.
- Initiate Agro-tourism activities in Raas el Ain Area.

For the Aamiq wetland, proposed rehabilitation and restoration projects and initiatives as listed in the management plan are the following:

Operational Objective 1: to reduce threats and pressures negatively affecting the conservation of Aamiq wetland

Project 1.1 Visitor Management

Project 1.2 Access control

Project 1.3 Fire management

Project 1.4 Water resource management

Project 1.5 Water quality management
Project 1.6 Land use planning and policies

The following initiatives are already being undertaken:

For Tyre Coast Nature Reserve:

Activity 3.1 Develop an administrative coordination mechanism among all the stakeholders concerned with Raas el ain (i.e Water department of the South, department of Antiquities, Litani Water Authority, Council for Development and Reconstruction, Ministry of Environment and the APAC).

Activity 3.2 Initiate Agro-tourism activities in Raas el Ain Area.

For Aamiq Wetland:

Project 1.1 Visitor Management
Project 1.2 Access control
Project 1.3 Fire management
Project 1.4 Water resource management
Project 1.5 Water quality management
Project 1.6 Land use planning and policies

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).

Refer to annex 1 for the full text of the law translated from Arabic.

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

Monitoring of proper enforcement of the hunting law and issuance of fines for violations of hunting is mainly undertaken by members of the Internal Security Forces. Monitoring of hunting violations is undertaken, but not the monitoring of hunting takes and levels. Such a plan will be developed as soon as the Higher Council on Hunting becomes operational.

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.

Hunting clubs and organizations are represented in the Higher Council for Hunting (HCH) through representatives from: The National Society for Wild Hunting, the Syndicate of Hunting Weapons and Ammunitions and the Lebanese Federation for Shooting and Hunting.

The Hunting law through article 4 c) states that the Minister of Environment according to a suggestion from the HCH issues decisions that:

- Specify the conditions and the standards in addition to the special clubs in which every applicant for a hunting license for the first time would undergo a proficiency test.
- Establish centers to raise various birds and animals species on the condition that these species are local or migrants especially those that are globally threatened, for the reason of increasing their numbers and then releasing them in the wild for the sake of biodiversity and environmental balance. Relevant organizations are mandated for this matter.

Article 6 states that it is strictly prohibited to hunt outside the defined hunting periods, and the hunter should have a license issued by the Ministry of Environment, based on:

- A legal license to carry guns issued by the Ministry of Defense for the Category (type) 4 arms (furred prey), and from the Ministry of Interior and Municipality for category 5 arms (hunting of wild birds)
- Insurance policy that would ensure that others are covered in case any damage occurred to them from hunting practices, this issue will be regulated through a decree issued by the Council of Ministries

Accordingly, Ministerial decisions will be issued and decrees will be drafted when the Higher Council of Hunting becomes operational.

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 Lebanon, the last past years have witnessed an increased interest and recognition of the role of eco-tourism as a driver of both economic development and conservation, as shown by the increase in numbers of tour operators or clubs, by the increased requests by the general public for such outings and activities, and the constant increase in development aid targeted towards this sector.

Significant outcomes regarding eco-tourism were achieved by the Ministry of Environment through the Protected Areas project and the MedWetCoast project mainly related to the training of local guides, the development of bed and breakfast and the improved status of conservation in protected areas such as: Tyre Coast Nature reserve and in other wetland sites, in addition to initiatives carried out by local NGOs in this regards. Sites where conservation has been coupled with eco-tourism development have shown a strong adhesion by the local community.

- Promoting Aamiq wetland off-site through the MedWetCoast project (MoE/UNDPGEF), has focused on two main axes; (i) promoting the site among both eco-tour and traditional tour operators and (ii) introducing Aammiq wetland as an important place for conservation and eco-tourism in all relevant workshops, seminars and exhibitions. On the first Axis, the management team has facilitated an agreement between eco-tour operators and the Skaff family to encourage tourism group of Aammiq. In regards to traditional tourism sector, connections were established with the major tour operators to promote traditional tourism to the site. The MedWetCoast Project has collaborated with tour and eco-tour operators to promote visitors to the site. Eco-tourism has increased since the launching of the project
- The tourism zone in Tyre Coast Nature Reserve is a strong tourist attraction in the summer especially for swimmers, where some 59 regulated wooden booths are erected to serve

almost 3000 tourist on the weekends; this has led to illegal allocation of a parking area on the reserve lots. However, this issue has been dealt with on regular basis from the MoE, the APAC and the Municipality. Several solutions are under examination.

As for eco-tourism, it is presently limited to some bird and turtle watching activities, a few educational visits by locals, and the recreational activities that are taking place each summer.

The launching of Bed and Breakfast by the MoE through the MedWetCoast project in collaboration with APAC and the local community has also constituted an important part of ecotourism and has shown to be successful in terms of providing revenue to the local community as well social cultural exchange with foreign tourist. Naturalists and eco-tour operators are using this facility for their accommodation; therefore, the site is acting as a source of revenue for the local community.

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

Site based projects implemented by either the Ministry of Environment or Lebanese NGOs have demonstrated that local communities benefit from conservation efforts through various means. These relate to three main categories (i) direct economic benefits, (ii) strengthening of the social structure and (iii) improvement of ecosystem services. Such examples include:

- Bed and breakfast development,
- Job creation through guiding,
- Improving local skills,
- Ecological benefits through IPM and conservation of wetlands,
- Reducing vulnerability to floods and droughts, and
- Enhancing local pride.

Wetlands conservation has offered also the following benefits:

1. Water supply (quantity and quality)
2. Sustainable agriculture
3. Sustainable fisheries
4. Sustainable grazing
5. Food and other products for human use
6. Energy resources
7. Wildlife resources
8. Recreation and tourism opportunities
9. Part of the local cultural heritage
10. Source of aesthetic inspiration

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 precautionary principle and Environmental Impact Assessment are a main component of the Code of the Environment (Law # 444 dated 2002). However, for EIA and SEA to become mandatory, application decrees are required. The Ministry of Environment has prepared a draft decree for EIA and a draft decree for SEA and has submitted them to the Council of Ministers for approval.

Despite the delays in issuing the application decrees, EIAs are being requested for many projects that might have an impact on biodiversity including birds and their habitats. Request for SEAs also has started for some plans specially those that might have impacts on areas important for biodiversity.

EIA documents are required to include public participation, a description of biodiversity components and its processes, description of impacts on the short, medium and long term, as well as mitigation and alternatives in an effort to minimize impacts on biodiversity.

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.

The NCSR is the responsible body for all scientific research on behalf of the GoL. Consequently research priorities related to the work of the Ministry of Environment are determined in collaboration with the NCSR. It is to be noted that scientific research is constrained by budget availability as well as the availability of the required skills within NCSR.

In an effort to overcome these obstacles, the Ministry of Environment collaborates with private and public universities through the selection of research topics and the encouragement of various environmental fields within specialized departments.

1. IBAs identification:

The first national inventory of potential "Important Bird Areas" IBAs was conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha (two national NGOs) in coordination with the Ministry of Environment MOE. This research includes the identification of potential IBAs sites with defining a list of bird's species in each site.

These sites were suggested for study since they are suspected to be a habitat or migration path for globally rare or endangered species. Data on sites were submitted to Birdlife International who decides which location meets the required criteria and classify them accordingly as IBA. As result of this initiative, 42 sites in Lebanon were identified as potential IBAS progressively from 2005 till 2007 among which BirdLife International has declared 10 new IBAs in Lebanon in addition to the four IBAs that were already declared in 1994.

2. Biodiversity assessment in protected sites:

A biodiversity assessment was carried out in 2005 for each of the following sites: Palm Islands Nature reserve, Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, Horsh Ehden Nature Reserve, Al Shouf Cedar Nature Reserve and Ammiq Wetland. A list of bird species found in each reserve was prepared and species were ranked in terms of priorities (rare, endemic, noteworthy, most threatened and invasive).

This survey was conducted within the Protected Areas project funded by the GEF, under the execution of the Ministry of Environment (MOE) in Lebanon and UNDP where the Faculty of Sciences of the Lebanese University was selected to perform the assessment.

In Ammiq for example 253 bird's species were recorded including 13 globally threatened species according to IUCN Red List. Furthermore, 30 indicative species were ranked and their abundance was determined.

3. Research in the West Bekaa region:

Research has been conducted by A Rocha in the West Bekaa region through a number of short term and long term projects. These studies include:

- A survey of birds on the mountain slopes above Ammiq (1999 to 2000)
- A survey of breeding birds in threed beds of Ammiq marsh (2000)
- A study of the autumn routes of migrating raptors and other soaring birds in Lebanon
- A study of the breeding ecology of the Pale Rock Sparrow
- Survey of wintering Wild Fowl and Waders
- A survey of roosting Harrier species in Reed bed
- Bird inventory for Tannourine nature reserve

Ringling scheme is being run by A Rocha since 2001 in Ammiq marsh and on nearby hillsides. To date over 5700 birds of 85 species have been ringed including 13 controls (birds which have been ringed in one place and then are caught in another).

This programme provides valuable data on breeding and migrating birds.

4. Ringing of some species is performed in Arz El Shouf Cedars Reserve by Arz El Shouf Reserve management team.

5. Research to reduce threats for bird's species within their flyways:

- A programme was executed in 2005 by BirdLife in Partnership with SPNL through the PDF-B phase of the "Soaring Birds" project; it included a survey, data collection, consultation, network building and analysis in order to identify an appropriate cross regional strategy and programme of flyway and site specific actions needed to reduce the threats to birds using this flyway.

The project aims to make the flyway system "soaring birds friendly" (at the level of communities, planning authorities, land use systems etc...), thereby ensuring safe passage between breeding and non breeding grounds and to integrate conservation needs with the need for economic and social development at local and national level.

- A study was carried out in 2005 by SPNL through the "Conservation of the Syrian Serin species in Lebanon" project,

The team identified two foraging sites for the Syrian Serin within the Arz AL Shouf Cedars Nature Reserve in Lebanon, where the species was monitored and ringed during its post breeding stage with the help of A Rocha Lebanon. The study aimed to characterize the breeding and migration biology of the Syrian Serin in the Arz Al-Shouf nature reserve in Lebanon as well as to identify the threats that it is facing.

6. Briefing of Researches done In the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve:

Academic institutions and NGO's have assisted the management team in solving some conservation issues concerning landscape enhancement and plant identification, this collaboration resulted in:

- A Pancratium Study developed by students of the American University of Beirut
- A Bird Monitoring Evaluation carried out by SPNL and BirdLife International for potentially declaring Tyre Coast Nature Reserve as an IBA.

Since 2000 the MeWetCoast Project (MOE/UNDP/GEF) in collaboration with MEDASSET has carried out turtle monitoring in the reserve and surrounding beaches:

- Kasperek, M. (2004): The Mediterranean Coast of Lebanon: Habitat for endangered fauna and flora.
- Aureggi, M et al (2004). "Survey on Sea Turtle Nesting Activity, South Lebanon 2004"
- Cross, H et al (2005). "A Conservation and Action Plan for Lebanon: Mediterranean Marine Turtles".

Within the MedWetCoast Project framework the following studies have either taken place or are planning phase been conducted:

- Site diagnosis study: Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring in the Protected Areas/Lebanon prepared by the Lebanese University, 2004
- Water quality: Water and Sediment Quality of Aamiq Wetland and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve.

7. Briefing of Researches done in the Aamiq Wetland in the past three years: Studies have been carried out by the A Rocha Lebanon team on site:

- Pilot Study for the Ecological Monitoring of Aamiq Wetland 2005
- Amphibian Research Mission in Aamiq Area, Central Bekaa

Within the MedwetCoast Project framework the following studies have been conducted:

- Site diagnosis study: Biodiversity Assessment and Monitoring in the Protected Areas/Lebanon prepared by the Lebanese University
- Business plan: Developing a Viable Economic Framework for the Management of Aamiq Wetland.
- Water Quality and Sediment Study of Aamiq Wetland and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve.
- Ecological Monitoring Manual in collaboration with A Rocha Lebanon.

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 Following monitoring activities for bird species are implemented in the Nature Reserves or sites of birds importance:

- Concerning nesting and breeding of migratory birds in protected areas: monitoring is performed by protected areas management teams. Monitoring of migratory birds behaviour is performed by SPNL in IBAs
- The management plan of the Tyre Coast Nature Reserve prepared by the MedWetCoast project includes a site specific strategy for biodiversity monitoring. In addition, a monitoring manual was developed describing a strategy and methodology for designing a biodiversity monitoring program specially for endangered species in that particular reserve.

- The management plan of Ammiq marsh prepared by the MedWetCoast project includes a designed methodology which was developed in collaboration with A-Rocha to monitor migrating birds. Point counts and ringing to monitor population levels, wintering, breeding and passage of birds using the marsh to detect any changes in numbers of nationally and internationally scarce threatened species using the marsh specifically Harrier species and Corncrake and great snipe.
- The Biodiversity assessment study carried by the Protected Areas Project “PAP” (MoE/UNDP/GEF), in the five mentioned sites in section 5.1 included as well a biodiversity monitoring activity done in 2003/2004. This monitoring covered some bird indicative species, furthermore a site specific strategies and indicators for biodiversity monitoring were proposed

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.

Training on bird identification is performed within IBAs and protected areas:

Trainings for eco-guides and biodiversity identification in the nature reserves and Ammiq wetland including bird species has been implemented by the Ministry of Environment through the protected areas (funded by GEF and implemented by UNDP) and the MedWet Coast projects (funded by FFEM and implemented by UNDP) which included a module on bird identification and conservation.

In addition several trainings on bird identification, monitoring and conservation have been conducted in the vicinity of wetlands by SPNL and A Rocha

BirdLife International and SPNL have mobilized resources from EC-Life Third Countries Programme for the implementation of a three year project entitled “Building Capacity for Sustainable Hunting in Mediterranean Third Countries”. Co-funding from DBU through Euronatur – two German organizations – has allowed for the development of a two-year educational component, including the development of a training manual, student’s workbook and the delivery of training sessions in 50 schools per year. This project was implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and the education component in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

On the occasion of the Wetlands Monitoring Day in 2004, the Association for Forest Development and Conservation has organized a field visit with water monitoring activities for 200 school teachers and students.

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)?

Public awareness activities at national and local levels are performed. Those activities are targeted towards different age groups and various educational levels

Involvement of local communities in sustainable ecotourism in IBAs and Protected Areas helps in increasing awareness to protect biodiversity thus helps in preserving birds of prey. Awareness raising activities have mainly been undertaken in the form of national and local workshops, dissemination of brochures, posters and booklets radio-information bulletins on biodiversity in general including migrating birds, communication on the AEWA agreement with media journalists, as well as holding national festivals to gain support for the conservation of birds and wetlands.

The Ministry of environment, has organized many workshops, and issued and disseminated many posters and booklets regarding the conservation of protected areas and wetland and its biodiversity stressing on waterbirds for Aamiq wetland, Palm Island Nature Reserve and Tyre Coast Nature Reserve.

In addition, SPNL has produced many publications on migratory birds, IBAs, and wetlands and their importance for biodiversity and people.

At site levels, public awareness campaigns have been undertaken at the level of Tyre Coast Nature Reserve, a Ramsar site, in collaboration with TERRE, an environmental NGO. A Wetlands International funded project, implemented by SPNL, has also included activities related to school education and raising awareness of local farmers on wise-use practices in the mentioned site. The management body of the reserve has undertaken demonstration activities in order to shift agricultural practices towards organic or more environmentally friendly activities.

At the level of Ammik, a wetland IBA, A Rocha has undertaken several presentations in schools, churches and local communities.

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

Lebanon has been able to move forward on the implementation of several action items of the Action Plan. However, limited activities have taken place at the level of highly scientific and technical items of the Action Plan.

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

a. The Agreement Secretariat

Given the limited capacity available at the national level, further support and assistance is required from the AEWA secretariat in-between MOPs and reporting periods.

b. International organisations

c. AEWA NGO partners

BirdLife International specifically has demonstrated strong support and professionalism in supporting Lebanon in fulfilling different obligations under the AEWA agreement.

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

Harmonizing the Action Plan and obligations of the AEWA agreement with that of other international agreements such as the CBD and Ramsar convention, would allow for improved focus at the national level and optimal allocation of time and resources, in addition to harmonizing the Action Plan with the national priorities.

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

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

AFDC	Association for Forest Development and Conservation
AEWA	African-Eurasian Water Bird Agreement
BD	Biodiversity
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDR	Council for Development and Reconstruction
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
FFEM	Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HCH	Higher Council For Hunting
IBA	Important Bird Area
IPM	Integrated Pest Management
IUCN	World Conservation Union
MoE	Ministry of Environment
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSR	National Center for Scientific Research
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SISPAM	Stable Institutional Structure for Protected Areas Management
SPNL	Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon

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

Annex 1 – Framework Hunting Law for Lebanon
Laws
Law Number 580
The Hunting regulatory law in Lebanon

The Parliament issued, and the President of the Republic publishes this law that states:

Section 1

The Higher Council for Wild Hunting

Article 1

A Council for Wild Hunting is to be established in Lebanon and will be called “the Higher Council for Wild Hunting”, hereafter referred to as the ‘Council.’

The Council is constituted of one representative from the following ministries and public institutions: Justice, Agriculture, Environment, Interior and Municipalities, National Defense, Finance, National Council for Scientific Research, the National Society for Wild Hunting, a bird and mammal’s specialist, a representative of the Syndicate of Hunting Weapons and Ammunitions, Lebanese Federation for Shooting and Hunting, and national environmental organizations.

All members of the Council are volunteers who work for free.

Article 2

- a- The representatives listed in article 1 of this law are appointed for a non-renewable 3 years period, based on a decree issued by the Council of Ministers and specifying the ministries and concerned departments that are stated in article 1.
- b- The Council proceeds with its work as soon as the decree is issued.
- c- The internal system of the Council is issued by a decree from the council of ministers according to a suggestion by the Minister of Environment.
- d- The Council reports to the Minister of Environment as the guardianship authority.
- e- The Council is submitted to the supervision of the late accounting diwan

Article 3:

The Minister of Environment decides the beginning and end of the hunting season, and the permitted time to hunt in the season according to a recommendation submitted by the Council, assuming that the application of the principle of the natural heritage (continuation) is considered in the signed international agreements whereby hunting is prohibited in the breeding season of animals and birds and during their migration towards the breeding grounds or while taking care of their young.

Article 4:

- a- The guardianship Minister defines after consulting the council, the animals that are classified hunting preys, whereby hunting them is allowed during specific times which would be defined.
Other than the prey that are specified in the previous article, all other birds and animals whether wild, resident or migratory are considered protected all year long and hunting them is prohibited.

- b- The guardianship Minister takes the necessary decisions that prohibit whether for a temporary or permanent basis, the hunting of all birds or animals that demonstrate benefits to agriculture or to the environmental balance or {for the purpose of increasing this species' numbers due to the low local population counts} or due to the species being placed on the list of endangered birds and animals based on the international agreement signed with Lebanon, and those that are included in the IUCN Red List. The Minister of Environment specifies the areas and the periods in which hunting is prohibited within the calendar year, and that is based on recommendations by the Council.

- c- The Council recommends to the guardianship Minister to take decisions concerning:
 - i- Periods where hunting migrating birds and animals is allowed.
 - ii- Birds and animals that are harmful to agriculture or to the environmental balance and where hunting these species is allowed in the periods where it considers it convenient.
 - iii- Birds and animals that are prohibited to be hunted at all times, and the lands where hunting is prohibited based on the owners request or investors, including the municipalities.
 - iv- The guardianship Minister, according to a recommendation from the council, would specify the conditions and the standards. In addition to the special clubs in which every first time applicant for a license would undergo an exam, if applying after the issuing of this law.
 - v- Establishing centers to raise various wild birds and animals species on the condition that these species are local or migrants especially those that are globally threatened, for the reason of increasing the numbers and then releasing them so that to protect the biodiversity and environmental balance, relevant organizations are mandated for this matter.

Article 5

The Director General of the Ministry of Environment will act as government representative at the Council, he shall prepare its meetings and participate in the discussions without having the right to vote. The director general will be responsible of submitting the minutes of the council's meeting to the Minister, as well as to other concerned public administrations and to the public accounting administration.

Section 2

Wild Hunting System

Article 6:

It is strictly prohibited to hunt outside the specified periods, and the hunter should have a license issued by the Ministry of Environment, based on:

- d- A legal license to carry guns issued by the Ministry of Defense for the Category (type) 4 arms (furred prey), and from the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities for Category 5 arms (hunting of wild birds)
- e- Insurance policy that would insure that others are covered in case harm was done during hunting; this is issued by a decree agreed in the Council of Ministers.

Article 7:

No wild bird or animal in Lebanon is considered the property of anyone regardless of its species or origin, and the land owner or the person that has the right to the land, has the right to prohibit hunting by placing signs on the entrance of the land according to agreed practices.

Article 8:

It is strictly prohibited to hunt in cities, villages, picnic areas, public parks, protected areas; areas that have been categorized as {important heritage sites}, or less than 500 meters distance from residential areas, religious sites, public or private infrastructure, even if using arms that work by pressure or gas pressure, it's also prohibited to display hunted prey on the car and on main roads.

Article 9:

It is strictly prohibited to hunt using owls, lime sticks, nets, traps, artificial or real floating birds, by bait, chained birds, light projectors, as it is prohibited to use poison, gas, smoke, or electrical machines (calling machines).

It is not permitted to hunt except by using licensed fire arms, bow and arrow, with dogs or birds of prey.

It is strictly prohibited to flush Chukkars or deceive any kind of prey by attracting it through calling machines that play songs of birds and animals. It also prohibited chasing any bird of prey by using car or plane, as well as hunting in areas that are totally covered with snow.

Article 10:

It is prohibited in any season to snatch nests, destroy, sell, transport, grab, or hurt eggs, chicks, or wild animals or newborn birds. Moreover it is prohibited to export eggs or the new offspring of any wild bird or animal (except for the wild animals that are bred in farms) as well as the young of furred animals, and it is forbidden to cage wild chukkars.

Article 11:

It is prohibited to export hunted prey without a license issued by the Ministry of Environment.

Article 12:

It is strictly prohibited to produce or export lime sticks, or adhesive materials that are used to capture birds, or sell, take hold of, use or hunt birds with. It is strictly prohibited to sell, display, or use machines that make sounds similar to birds and animals (calling machines). It is also prohibited to promote these materials via the media or to pass temporarily through the Lebanese territories as transit.

Article 13:

The hunting license is personal (one user) and valid for one year and is issued by the Ministry of Environment solely to the hunters who have fully satisfied the conditions that are stated in article 6 of this law.

The license would have the person's name, residential address, his/her distinctive marks, person's signature or finger print, the species of birds that is allowed to be hunted; this license is handed to the person on the basis that he/she have paid the amount stated by this law, and the valid policies during the time the license is issued.

It is obligatory for the hunter to have his license to carry arms, hunting license as well as the special hunting insurance with him during hunting.

As for scientific researchers they are allowed to capture animals or birds for research reasons on the basis that they would later be freed alive and unharmed, also they are allowed to take eggs for research purposes, these researchers should obtain a special license based on an application they submit to the National Center for Scientific Research.

Section 3

Fines (Penalties)

Article 14

Each person caught:

- 1- Hunting during off season;
- 2- Possessing prey hunted during off-season;

3- Hunting in the lands of people who do not approve of hunting, in places that have agricultural plants or trees that were not yet harvested, in closed and fenced places or places designated by signs that were mentioned in article 7 of this law;

Will be jailed up to a month, fined 500000 LP, or both these penalties, and the hunting license will be retrieved for a duration of one to three years.

Article 15

A person is fined and sent to jail as mentioned in the former article, and in due course with the permanent seizing of the used weapon, and when necessary, to destroy all equipments and banned materials that are used in hunting, anyone who is caught:

- 1- Hunting without a license.
- 2- Hunting with banned equipment.
- 3- Hunting beneficial or banned birds.

Article 16

In case of repeated violations, only the financial fine will be doubled, without doubling the imprisonment fine.

The repeated violations penalty is applied to any person whom has violated provisions of article 10 of this law or hunts endangered species.

Any person referred to the court 24 months after committing the first violation, is considered a repeated violator.

Article 17

The guards of the protected areas have the right to give tickets to violators within the boundaries of the protected areas.

Article 18

Except for internal security officers and rangers appointed by the Ministry of Agriculture, the individuals listed below, under certain circumstances to enforce the law, are given the right to give tickets for violators and to send them to the concerned authorities:

Rangers of nature reserves who have the necessary qualifications that are certified by the Council.

Article 19

Any hunter who is caught violating any articles set by this law who is disguised, masked or who refuses to identify himself, or any one who does not have a known residence, shall be tried in front of an assigned judge where the violation is done.

Section 4

License fees

Article 20

License fees for owning/carrying a weapon are specified in category 4 (loaded hunting weapon) and the corresponding ammunition sum up to an amount of two hundred thousand LL/200,000 LL for every piece of weaponry. This amount is paid once i.e. when the permit is issued.

- license fees for owning and carrying a weapon of category 5 (hunting weapon) and its corresponding ammunition are specified as such:
 - 1- The amount of 50,000 LL for all single muzzle/hole (single shot)
 - 2- The amount of 100,000 LL for all double muzzles rifle
 - 3- The amount of 200,000 LL for all semi-automatic, single muzzle weapons (3 shot-capacities)
 - 4- The amount of 200,000 L.B.P. for all multiple muzzle weapons (more than one bullet muzzle)

Article 21:

A license fee for wild hunting is granted by the Ministry of Finance through a recommendation from the guardianship Minister.

These fees are complemented with a special stamp “wild hunting stamp” issued by the Ministry of Finance in accordance with the details and components adopted by the Council and officially approved of by both the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Environment.

Article 22

This law cancels all laws and texts that oppose or are in violation of this law and its doctrines and especially the wild hunting regulation that was issued in June 18, 1952 and its adjustments (i.e. Articles 81 and following), except for the relevant laws and decrees related to the National Council for Wild Hunting with all issues that are not in opposition or do not violate the words of the law.

Article 23

The law is upheld by application decrees, when necessary, the minutes of the application of that law.

Article 24

This law will be put into effect as soon as it is published in the official gazette.

Baabda on February 25, 2004

Signed by: Emile Lahoud

Issued by the President of the Republic

The Prime Minister

Signed by: Rafic al-Hariri