



FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES

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

Implementation during the period and

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Table of Contents

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation	5
2. Species conservation	6
Legal measures	6
Single Species Action Plans	6
Emergency measures	6
Re-establishments	7
Introductions	7
3. Habitat conservation	8
Habitat inventories	8
Conservation of areas	8
Rehabilitation and restoration	8
4. Management of human activities	9
Hunting	9
Eco-tourism	9
Other human activities	9
5. Research and monitoring	10
Status of research and monitoring programmes for species	10
6. Education and information	11
Training and development programmes	11
Raising public awareness	11
7. Final comments	12
8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties	13
9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions	14
List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report	15
References	16
Appendices	17
Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans	17
Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance	
Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance	17
Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects	17
Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	17

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

1.1 Summary of progress to date

The Government of Lebanon ratified the AEWA agreement in 2002. The reporting period covered includes the initiation and acclimatizing 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 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 and of the drafting of decrees related to impact assessment. Finally, a paper identifying the necessary steps for the development of a national policy and strategy for the management of wetlands has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment with funding from the UNDP country programme. Details on these are available under section 2.1 of the report.

Additionally, the Ministry of Environment has collaborated with the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) 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 Ministry of Environment has also endorsed the Important Bird Areas concept, consequently a national inventory of IBAs is being conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha Lebanon, two national conservation NGOs. The inventory is due to be finalized in 2007, and will cover sites important for the conservation of migratory water birds.

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 one of the wetlands.

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 two 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.

Most recently, and due to the increased weariness regarding the contamination of poultry from wild birds carrying avian influenza virus, a strict ban on hunting has been issued on all the Lebanese territory and has triggered increased interest in the development of a proper monitoring strategy for migratory birds and the sites they rely on.

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

Issuing the organizational decree of the higher council for hunting that will act as the main body for the preparation of implementation decrees for hunting in Lebanon. These include the specification of game birds, hunting seasons, bag sizes and hunting sites. The framework law also includes considerations related to hunting practices and their monitoring.

Implementation of the hunting law (Law #528, February 2004), 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.

Follow-up 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.

Increasing the management of protected areas staff, specifically for IBAs, in relation to their management and conservation.

Issuing a decree for the application of impact assessment (EIA & SEA) in 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 being currently conducted.

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

Placing Lebanon on the international map of birdwatching 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?

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.

Law for the organization of hunting in Lebanon has been issued in February 2004, aiming at regulating hunting. This law requires several application decrees to be implemented, including the initiation of a Higher Council of Hunting headed by the Ministry of Environment and comprised of representatives of conservation NGOs, hunting organizations, and line ministries.

Threat analysis on sectoral policies impacting the conservation of migratory birds has been undertaken, including the energy, agriculture and land use planning. A project has been submitted to the GEF/UNDP that will aim at alleviating these pressures and at mainstreaming bird conservation in these different sectors.

A draft Protected Areas law has been prepared as a means to ensure the systematic protection of key habitats.

A paper entitled “Towards a Policy and Strategy for the Conservation of Wetlands” has been prepared under the guidance of the Ministry of Environment and with funding from the UNDP country programme.

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

The manual on of EIA and SEA on integration of BD into impact assessment was prepared by the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon which is responsible for delivering two trainings on the use of the manual for environmental consultancy firms and

conservation NGOs, in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment.

Regarding the regulation of hunting, the Higher Council of Hunting, headed by the Ministry of Environment, is responsible for issuing all decrees and legislation regarding the application of the law. Personnel from the Ministry of Environment – Protected Areas Guards; Ministry of Agriculture – Forest guards; Ministry of Interior – Internal Security Forces; are responsible for the enforcement of the law. The permitting bodies have not yet been designated as this matter will be decided by the Higher Council on Hunting.

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

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

The NBSAP is currently being updated, where specific laws for the protection of key species have been suggested.

In addition to that, management plans for protected wetland sites 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):

The Ministry of Environment is currently working on ratifying the CITES convention as an effort to limit the illegal trade in all species. Once this is ratified, proper training and measures will be afforded to ensure a smooth coordination with the trade industry and the customs officers.

In addition, through the framework law on hunting, the Higher Council on Hunting will work on determining monitoring schemes, setting bag sizes and issuing fines for violations, specifically those related to the hunting of protected species.

No exemptions to any of these measures have been taken.

- a. Taking of, and trade in birds listed in Column A and B of Table 1 (where utilization or trade contravenes the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 (a) and 2.1.2 of the Action Plan)?*
- b. Methods of taking?*
- c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?*
- d. Sustainable hunting of species listed in Categories 2 and 3 (and marked by an asterisk) in Column A only?*
- e. Exemptions to the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3?*

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.

None undertaken

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).

The framework law on hunting includes an article related to the introduction of game species in Lebanon. However, the details of this article require the issuance of an application decree, which is pending the initiation of the Higher Council on Hunting and the completion of the necessary studies.

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 is currently being conducted jointly by SPNL and A Rocha, two NGOs, with the full endorsement and cooperation of the Ministry of Environment. This inventory is funded by the MAVA foundation, and is due to be finalized in 2007. 40 sites have been identified as potential IBAs, including several wetlands and coastal areas.

As a measure to ensure that these sites are not impacted by economic activities until completion of the studies, the Ministry of Environment plans on overlaying their locations on its own maps for orientation of the decision-making process.

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.

None published yet.

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.)

Sites are usually protected by the issuance of a national law voted by the parliament. In the

case of privately-owned land – such as in the case of the Ammik wetland IBAs, incentive measures and case-by-case agreements are being developed.

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 are being developed for 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 site management bodies, which consist of either volunteer Government Appointed Committees or 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.

The Ministry of Environment is involved throughout the management planning process and the final document is officially endorsed by the Ministry of Environment.

The very first management plans were finalized in 2000, and were mainly aimed towards conservation efforts as a main goal. The latest versions of management plans have evolved towards more comprehensive documents with impact indicators and time-bound objectives.

The local management bodies mentioned above are responsible for the implementation of the activities of the management plans and are required to report back periodically to 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.

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?

Management plans for 2 wetland sites of importance for migratory water birds are currently being developed.

c. Being implemented?

One site of importance for migratory water birds is already endowed with a management plan that has been implemented. The management plan was prepared for a period of 5 years, from 2000 to 2005, and will be updated and revised soon.

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.

In an effort to improve pollution control, the Ministry of Environment has issued decrees for

minimum standards of discharge water into water bodies. 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.

Not yet.

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?

Enforcement of hunting is undertaken by entities that are external to the Ministry of Environment, namely 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.

This is dependent on the issuance of the application decrees of the framework law on hunting.

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.

Proper monitoring of tourism contribution to the national revenue is not undertaken in Lebanon, more so is the case of eco-tourism.

However, there is clearly 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 from eco-tourism projects mainly relate to the training of local guides, the development of bed and breakfast and the improved status of conservation. Sites where conservation has been coupled with eco-tourism development have shown a strong adhesion by the local community. Such an example includes the ban on hunting proclaimed by the local municipality and enforced by all the community at a wetland site in the Bekaa area (Kfarzabad wetland).

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.

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. However, for EIA to become mandatory, an application decree is required. This application decree has been drafted and submitted to the Council of Ministers for endorsement. The same applies for a decree on SEA.

Despite the delays in issuing the application decrees, EIAs are being requested for many projects that might have an impact on birds and their habitats.

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

Except for the research undertaken within the IBA inventory conducted by SPNL and A Rocha, little research activities are undertaken in Lebanon regarding bird species. Some academic researchers are conducting such research, however information are received by the MoE upon publication of the results.

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.

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

6. Education and information

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 is being implemented in full cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and the education component is being undertaken 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.

Training and development programmes

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

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

In addition, a training for eco-guides has been implemented by the Med Wet Coast project (funded by FFEM and implemented by UNDP) which included a module on bird identification and conservation.

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)?

Awareness raising activities have mainly been undertaken in the form of radio-information bulletins on 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.

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.

The management body at this site 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.

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
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
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 is 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