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**3rd SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE AGREEMENT ON THE
CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS (AEWA)**
23 – 27 October 2005, Dakar, Senegal

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

Introduction

In accordance with Article VIII, Paragraph h) of the Agreement, the Secretariat shall prepare, on an annual basis and for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, reports on the work of the Secretariat and on the implementation of the Agreement.

During the triennium 2003-2005 the Agreement Secretariat has reported back to each meeting of the Technical and Standing Committee. These were “rolling documents” containing the latest information on developments since the last meetings of each Committee.

The current report is more or less a consolidation of the reports mentioned above, and covers the period from 1 January 2003 to 1 September 2005.

Overview of the activities of the AEWA Secretariat

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat consists of responding to incoming mail, maintaining contact with AEWA’s network of Contracting and Non-Contracting Parties, IGOs and NGOs as well as, last but not least, dealing with financial and administrative matters. In addition, the Secretariat has had to devote considerable time to more general issues, e.g. the move to of the Secretariat to the OBS building in 2004 and the expected move of our office to the new UN Campus in 2006. The latter move is proving time-consuming because it involves many different issues, from security to the furniture required for the new office. The Heads of Agencies at the United Nations Premises in Bonn meet regularly to discuss issues of common concern regarding the UN Campus. The Executive Secretary attends these meetings as Head of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

This report is divided into four sections:

1. General matters: these include administrative/financial issues, staffing, future premises, meetings, etc;
2. Information management: this includes the Newsletter, website, etc.;
3. Cooperation with other organisations;
4. Technical and/or scientific matters: these include projects that are contracted out by the Secretariat and/or projects carried out by others in which the Secretariat is closely involved.

The day-to-day work will not be covered in this report.

1. General matters

Future Premises for the Agreement Secretariat

In 2003 the Federal Government of Germany offered the United Nations two buildings adjacent to the Bundeshaus (the former plenary chamber of the German Parliament) in Bonn for use as the future UN Campus. The UN greatly appreciated and accepted this offer. Since then plans for the UN Campus have been developed. Currently the following UN organisations have their seat in Bonn:

- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);
- United Nations Volunteers (UNV);
- United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD);
- Liaison Office of the Regional United Nations Information Centre for Western Europe (RUNIC);
- UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training;
- United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;
- United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security;
- WHO European Centre for Environment and Health;
- UNEP/CMS;
- UNEP/ASCOBANS;
- UNEP/AEWA

All but one of the agencies listed above will be accommodated in the building known as the “Langer Eugen”; the exception is UNFCCC, to which a separate building, the “Altes Hochhaus” has been allocated. According to the latest information renovation work in the Langer Eugen will be completed early in 2006, after which the move will take place. The Altes Hochhaus will be ready at a later date, probably somewhere in 2007.

A hotel and a large conference centre will be built in the vicinity to complete the Campus. The Federal Government of Germany, the region of North Rhine-Westphalia and the City of Bonn have allocated funding for the project.

Administration and Fund Management Unit

Since MOP2 the Executive Secretary of CMS has done his utmost to obtain more Staff for the Common Administration Unit, which is financed from the UNEP overhead charges. He succeeded in convincing the Executive Director of UNEP and it was agreed that a total of five posts would be provided free of charge for the Admin Unit. As of November 2004 all these posts have been filled, meaning that the Admin Unit is now fully staffed. This Unit is responsible for all administrative and fund management related issues for the whole CMS family based in Bonn.

The services that the Admin Unit should provide to all the Agreements Secretariats are laid down in a Service Level Agreement. This Agreement was concluded and its implementation started in January 2005. A first evaluation will be made later this year.

Staff recruitment

The recruitment of the Technical Officer (P2) Mr Sergey Dereliev (Bulgaria), who entered on duty on 15 August 2004 went relatively smoothly. The same was the case when Mrs Mirna Maya Espinosa decided to resign as Secretary/Assistant. The post was upgraded to G5 level and Ms Marie-Therese Kämper was recruited. Unfortunately there have been delays in filling the upgraded post of Executive Secretary, which has also been re-classified at the P4 level and has been advertised. The deadline for applications was 23 December 2003 and so far¹ interviews have not taken place.

1 As of 25th of August 2005

In August 2004 information was received that the Deputy Director of UNEP had granted priority to Junior Professional Officer (JPO) requests from CMS and from AEWA. At the end of 2004 the German Government informed the Agreement Secretariat that they had decided to provide the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat with a JPO for Information Management. At the beginning of 2005 this post was advertised and it is foreseen that as of 1 October 2005 the JPO will enter on duty. He will spend 50 percent of his time on the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project and 50 percent on the implementation of the AEWA Communication Strategy and also supporting the CMS family in improving its outreach, communication and information activities.

Temporary Staff

AEWA is becoming more and more well known. This has in turn led to increased activities by the Secretariat e.g. workshops, meetings of the Standing and Technical Committee, preparation of the Newsletter and brochures, etc. Without the assistance of temporary staff the Secretariat would not have been able to do all the work that has been done over the last few years. The Secretariat is very grateful that we had the means to contract some additional temporary staff. Unfortunately UN Rules and Regulations do not allow temporary staff members to be kept on for longer than six months, although in exceptional cases the period may be extended by the Executive Director of UNEP for a further three months. This means that in general every six months temporary staff members must be replaced. It also means that as soon as the temporary staff member has become familiar with the work, he/she leaves the Secretariat again. In addition to this temporary staff does not have access to the IMIS system. This is the new computer program that is used to prepare contracts, financial obligations, payments, etc. Only staff with a fixed-term appointment receive a username and personal password to access the system, and specific rights to enter or certify data, or to approve obligations and payments etc. It is clear that temporary staff are very useful for the short term but that this is not a suitable solution for the long term, particularly not where there is a constant need for additional support to enable the Secretariat to fulfil all the tasks assigned to it by the Meeting of the Parties, Standing Committee or Technical Committee. It is now common practice for the AEWA Secretariat to recruit people that have completed an internship with CMS, EUROBATS or ASCOBANS. By doing this we avoid having to spend too much time familiarising these new Staff members familiar with UNEP and/or the CMS family and in particular with the UN Rules and Regulations.

Without going into too much detail, an overview is given below of the persons that have worked for the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat since 1 January 2003. In this overview also information could be found on the main tasks of these consultants, their nationality and duration of stay.

Name	Nationality	Period	Main tasks carried out²
Mr Kim Liffers (Part-time)	German	Jan '03-March '03	Maintenance of Agreement's website
Mr Dirk Hendriks	German	April '03-Aug '03	Information management
Ms. Yuki Itakura (Part-time)	Japanese	Oct. '03-Oct. '04	Information management and preparations for TC5
Ms. Bianca Bauch	German	July '03-Sept. '04	Preparation of scientific documents for TC5
Ms. Ina von Frantzius	German	Apr.'04-July '04	Membership development and drafting of Newsletter 10
Ms. Catherine Lehmann (Part-time/ full-time ³)	German/ French	Jan. '05- Dec. '05	Logistical preparations for MOP3/information management

² Besides these main tasks all temporary staff supported the Secretariat in its daily work.

³ Since July 2005

Mr Florian Keil (Part-time)	German	Sept '04- May '05	Designing of new AEWA website and E-news letter
Ms. Nienke Beintema (Part-time)	Dutch	June' 05- Dec. 05	Drafting of AEWA Articles/MOP3 Newsletter
Ms. Ayhan Polat (Part-time)	German/ Turkish	Apr. '05-Dec. '05	Logistical arrangements for MOP3
Ms. Dunia Sforzin (Part-time)	German	Aug. '05- Oct. '05	Logistical arrangements for MOP3/drafting substantial documents for MOP3
Ms. Sophie Hansen	German/ French	Sept. '05-Oct. '05	Logistical arrangements for MOP3

Interns

In addition to contracting consultants we also had the possibility to have some interns working for us free of charge. Most of the interns that work for the CMS family are graduates with a first university degree seeking working experience. In a number of cases this has proved valuable for them. Following their internships they have been contracted as consultants by one of the Agreements or CMS. Some have meanwhile found permanent posts outside the United Nations.

The following people have worked as interns for the AEWA Secretariat:

Name	Nationality	Period	Main tasks carried out ⁴
Mr Irimie Doru	Romanian	July '03-Sept '03	Drafting of ninth issue of the Newsletter
Ms. Hélène Becker	French	Nov.'03- Dec. '03	Support with administrative tasks
Ms Andrea Rechel	German	Oct' 03- March '04	Support with financial tasks
Mr Tim Jansen	German	December '04	Drafting substantial documents for TC6
Mr Ricardas Patiejunas	Lithuanian	Since August '05	Support with financial tasks

Finalisation of MOP2

Since MoP2 the Secretariat has been working on the follow-up of the meeting, i.e. finalisation of documents that were adopted etc. Meanwhile, the following Action Plans have been published and officially launched:

- Action Plan for the Great Snipe
- Action Plan for the Black-winged Pratincole
- Action Plan for the Sociable Lapwing

Issues still outstanding are the finalisation of the following guidelines:

- Guideline on avoiding the introduction of invasive species
- Guideline on National Legislation.

With the limited resources available the Secretariat hopes that it will be possible to finalise and publish these guidelines by end of 2005.

⁴ Besides these main tasks all temporary staff supported the Secretariat in its daily work.

Meetings of the subsidiary bodies and working groups of the Agreement

During the period 2003-2005 the following Technical Committee (TC) and Standing Committee (StC) meetings were organised and serviced by the Agreement Secretariat:

Standing Committee

- StC1-Bonn, Germany (November 2003);
- StC2-Bonn, Germany (November 2004);
- StC3-Bonn, Germany (July 2005);

Technical Committee

- TC3-Tashkent, Uzbekistan (May 2003);
- TC4-North Berwick, Scotland (April 2004);
- TC5-Flic en Flac, Mauritius (May 2005);

A detailed report on the work of the Standing Committee and the Technical Committee can be found respectively in documents AEWA/MOP3.6 and AEWA/MOP 3.7

Working Group

- Third meeting of the Dark-bellied Brent Goose Working Group (Jan. '04)

The Dark-bellied Brent Goose Working Group is the only 'external' working group so far established under the auspices of the TC. Its task is to finalise drafting of the International Action Plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose and, as soon as it has been adopted by the Standing Committee, to initiate and to stimulate its implementation. Unfortunately the Action Plan could not be finalised so far due to the fact that not all Range States have given their comments on the sixth draft of the Action Plan.

Workshops to promote sustainable hunting

Since 2001 when the first workshop was held in Romania to promote the use of non-toxic shot for hunting in wetlands, the Agreement Secretariat has taken a proactive role on this subject. Meanwhile the issue has also been taken up by other organizations, e.g. CIC, BirdLife International and Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (ONCFS).

Western Africa

From 23-28 October 2004 the AEWA workshop to promote sustainable hunting in Western Africa was held in Senegal. This workshop was organised by ONCFS in close cooperation with Wetlands International, CIC, OMPO, the Government of Senegal and the AEWA Secretariat. FNC significantly contributed to the funding of the workshop with 15,000 € Approximately 40 participants representing most of the Western African countries participated. At the end of the workshop 11 recommendations were adopted, focusing partly on improving waterbird surveys and partly e.g. on setting quotas for the number of birds that may be harvested.

Northern Africa and Middle East

BirdLife International/RSPB has received a grant under the EU's LIFE-Third countries programme to improve the conservation of birds in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Under this project workshops to promote sustainable hunting in these regions are also planned. Agreement has been reached between RSPB and the AEWA Secretariat regarding organisation of these workshops under the AEWA flag to be held in Lebanon (2005) and in Tunisia (2006).

Workshops to promote accession to AEWA and CMS

Madagascar

In May 2005 a workshop took place in Madagascar to promote the accession of this country to CMS and AEWA. The AEWA Executive Secretary participated in this workshop and gave an introduction on CMS and later also on AEWA. About 60 representatives of the Government and NGOs participated in this

workshop and a lively discussion took place about the pros and cons of joining CMS and AEWA. One of the recommendations of this workshop was that the Government of Madagascar should be urged to accede to CMS and AEWA in due course.

Chad

A small grant has been given to the Government of Chad to organise a workshop to promote the accession to AEWA. Unfortunately due to other commitments the Agreement Secretariat could not participate at this workshop. So far no report has been received about the outcome of this event.

Requests have been received from other countries to organise similar workshops to those mentioned above. It is clear that these workshops are extremely useful, particularly when the Agreement Secretariat can participate and provide all the information needed to take a decision on accession.

Central Asian Flyway Workshop

From 10-12 June 2005 the workshop “To conclude and endorse the proposed Central Asian Flyway Action Plan to conserve Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats” took place in New Delhi, India. Nearly 100 participants from Afghanistan, *Armenia*⁵, *Azerbaijan*, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, *Iran*, *Iraq*, *Kazakhstan*, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, *Russian Federation*, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, *Turkmenistan*, *United Arab Emirates*, *United Kingdom*, *Uzbekistan* and *Yemen* participated.

The workshop was organized by CMS in cooperation with Wetlands International. Support came from various sources, including the AEWA Secretariat. The latter had received support from the Government of Switzerland, and this was passed directly to the CMS Secretariat. In addition the AEWA Secretariat gave support in kind to the CAF workshop.

Taking into account that 16 out of 30 countries identified as Range States for CAF are located within the AEWA Agreement Area, the development of CAF is of great importance for AEWA from a strategic point of view. Unfortunately the New Delhi workshop did not have the status of an intergovernmental meeting; which meant that neither formal adoption by the Ranges States nor formal approval of a legal framework to be put in place to implement the Action Plan was possible. CMS has announced that in 2006 at the latest they will organize such a meeting. Meanwhile an interim mechanism will be established by CMS later this year.

Although no formal decisions could be taken at the New Delhi meeting, many of the participants present expressed interest in integrating the CAF into AEWA. As laid down in the New Delhi statement, the AEWA Secretariat is requested to remain closely involved in the further development of CAF.

2. Information management

Communication Strategy

One of the projects listed in the International Implementation Priorities (IIP) 2003-2007 is the development of a Communication Strategy for the Agreement. Needless to say communication, particularly nowadays with the current information technology, is extremely important. It was felt that a strategy that could help to enhance the internal and external communication was lacking. By the end of 2002 funds had been received from the UK to develop a Communication Strategy for the Agreement.

A consultancy having been contracted to do this work, the first step made was to consult several Contracting and Non-Contracting Parties, IGOs and NGOs to seek their views on the current information

⁵ Countries in italic are AEWA Range States. Uzbekistan is so far the only Contracting Party to AEWA.

exchange between the Secretariat and themselves, and to assess their needs and ways to improve communication. Based on this so-called quick scan, the Communication Strategy was drafted. Drafts of the Strategy were presented at meetings of the Technical Committee and the Standing Committee. The latter approved the final draft at its 3rd meeting for submission to MOP3 for formal adoption.

Newsletters

During the period 2003-2005 the Secretariat was not able to publish the regular AEWA Newsletter twice a year as planned; due to lack of resources. Thus only the ninth and tenth issue were published. In addition to this a special edition of the AEWA Newsletter on the outcomes of MOP2 was produced.

One of the outcomes of the quick scan mentioned-above is that it would be highly appreciated if the Agreement Secretariat could communicate more regularly on developments of general interest. The Secretariat therefore decided to create an electronic Newsletter. In mid-June 2005 E-news was launched, and the Secretariat is now trying to draft and distribute this electronic Newsletter on a monthly basis.

Website

It has been noted by the Secretariat that while the “old” website contained much useful information, this was not easily accessible. Therefore it was decided to re-design and re-organise the whole website. The outcome of this exercise is that the website has an entirely new look as well as an improved file structure and navigation. The design is based on a similar one developed for CMS and EUROBATS, to stress that we are all part of the “CMS family”. The new website was launched on 1 March 2005.

DVD/AEWA Film

In March 2003 agreement was reached with a consortium of Fiction Film and Musch & Tinbergen to start developing a DVD about AEWA. The idea is to shoot a large amount of footage in the coming years, which can be used for promotion of the Agreement. The first part of the DVD was officially launched at the Global Flyway Conference held in Edinburgh (UK) in April 2004. This project has also been integrated in the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project; which together with the funds available through voluntary contributions to AEWA will provide ample opportunities to continue work on developing this DVD in future.

AEWA Exhibition

At CMS COP7 and AEWA MOP2 the common exhibition for CMS and its Agreements was launched. In this exhibition there was only limited space for information on AEWA, so it was decided to develop an AEWA-only exhibition using the same design so that the panels are interchangeable. The AEWA Exhibition was also launched at the Global Flyway Conference in Edinburgh in 2004.

Additional outreach materials

At the end of 2004, agreement was reached with the Government of Luxembourg to support the Secretariat in designing and printing additional outreach material comprising the Accession Guide, stickers, pins, CD-ROMS and posters.

Accession Guide

As indicated in the draft Communication Strategy, one of the outcomes of the quick scans was that some Range States felt the need for an Accession Guide. Such a guide should contain basic information on how to accede to the Agreement. Meanwhile, the text of this guide has been drafted and distributed to the TC and StC for comments. Based on the comments received, the text has been amended and the guide printed in Arabic, Russian, English and French.

Reference CD-ROM

The Secretariat felt that it would also be useful to have a CD-ROM containing important documents related to AEWA. With the support of the Government of Luxembourg, three hundred copies of this CD

have been produced. In addition 1,700 blank CD-ROMs have been given to the Secretariat for future updates of the reference CD-ROM.

Stickers

Stickers have been designed and produced to promote the Agreement. The stickers show the AEWA logo or one of five AEWA species (Ferruginous Duck, Black-winged Pratincole, Great Snipe, White-headed Duck and Northern Bald Ibis).

Pins

Large numbers of pins with the AEWA logo have been produced.

Posters

In addition to the three existing posters on Flamingos, Dark-bellied Brent Goose and Red Knot, two new posters have been designed and printed, namely for the Black Stork and the Common Crane.

3. Cooperation with other organizations

Joint Work Programme with Wetlands International

At MOP2 the draft Joint Work Programme (JWP) between Wetlands International, CMS and AEWA was circulated. The final JWP was signed in 2003. The implementation is well under way and so far two meetings have been held to review the progress made.

Joint work programme with the Ramsar Secretariat

During the Global Flyway Conference, the Joint Work Programme (JWP) between the Secretariats of RAMSAR, CMS and AEWA was signed. So far, it has not proved feasible to organise a first meeting with the Secretariats involved to discuss the implementation of the JWP.

Joint Work Programme with UNCCD

CMS has initiated discussions to strengthen the cooperation between the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and CMS. From the start the AEWA Secretariat has been involved in these activities. Meanwhile a Memorandum of Understanding has been concluded between UNCCD and CMS. Currently discussions are taking place on the development of a JWP.

OMPO (Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental)

As approved by the Standing Committee during its first meeting, the Secretariat may strengthen cooperation with OMPO. Due to lack of human resources, no progress could be made regarding drafting a Memorandum of Cooperation between both organisations.

4. Projects

African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project

The GEF Council approved the project brief for the full-size project in October 2003. Since then Wetlands International in close cooperation with UNEP/ GEF has worked on transferring the full-size project brief into an operational document. It is expected that the implementation of this project will start in the second half of 2005. Recruitment of a Project Officer and an Assistant is under way. Wetlands International will present more detailed information on this project at MOP3. It is obvious that this project is of high political/strategic relevance for AEWA as well as for CMS. Both organisations have done their utmost to solve the problems encountered so far. By linking several projects from the AEWA International Implementation Priorities 2003-2007 to the GEF project, but also by allocating 50 percent of the time of the Junior Professional Officer etc., the AEWA Secretariat has been able to allocate a substantial amount of support to this project, which is in the order of US \$ 1.3 million. By doing so AEWA, together with the

Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, who are allocating EURO 1 million to this project, is one of the major co-funders.

International Single Species Action Plans

The following International Single Species Action Plans have been finalised; which means that the text has been amended where needed based on the comments received from Range States and experts:

- Light-bellied Brent Goose – East Canadian High Arctic population;
- Northern Bald Ibis;
- Corncrake;
- White-headed Duck;
- Ferruginous Duck;

All the Action Plans mentioned above will be submitted to MOP3 for formal adoption. Worthy of mention is that the development of the Action Plans for the Corncrake and the White-headed Duck is a joint activity of the European Union, CMS and AEWA. The Ferruginous Duck Action Plan is supported by CMS and AEWA.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose Action Plan

Since the third meeting of the Brent Goose Working Group, which took place on 14 January 2004 in Wageningen, Netherlands, not much progress has been made in finalising the Action Plan. The problem is that not all key countries have submitted their comments on the fifth draft. The Secretariat has reminded them several times, but so far without any result.

Maccoa Duck

Drafting of an action plan for the species was contracted out by the Secretariat to the African Gamebird Research Education and Development Trust. The draft is to be submitted to the Secretariat is before end of 2005.

Lesser White-fronted Goose

An update of the Action Plan for this species was contracted out by the Secretariat to BirdLife International. A workshop was hosted by Finland at the beginning of April 2005. The draft Action Plan is expected to be submitted in 2006.

International Implementation Priorities 2003-2007⁶

The AEWA Secretariat plays an active role in the implementation of the International Implementation Priorities. One of the Secretariat's tasks is to seek and whenever possible to secure necessary funds to implement some of the projects. Unfortunately, 2003/2005 was not the best period for fundraising. The economic recession has had an impact on voluntary contributions to the Agreement due to the fact that most of the Ministries of industrialised countries are faced with budget cuts. Luckily, it has still been possible to secure funds for a number of projects. For an overview of progress made in the implementation of the IIP 2003-2007, see *Doc AEWA/ MOP3.18*.

The AEWA Secretariat is also taking part in the current project led by the CMS Secretariat to raise private and corporate sector funds for the CMS Family, focussed on Germany as the host country.

⁶ MOP2 adopted the International Implementation Priorities 2003-2007 (IIP 2003-2007). Prior to that, the IIP 2000-2004 had been in force; part of the project mentioned above originated from IIP 2000-2004 and part from the new IIP.