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“Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands”

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Prepared by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the adoption of Resolution 3.10 by MOP3 in Dakar, Senegal in October 2005, AEWA Parties clearly recognized the importance of communication as a central and cross-cutting element for implementing the Agreement. Through Resolution 3.10 Contracting Parties also endorsed a Communication Strategy for the Agreement, and underlined that its implementation would have to be a shared responsibility, particularly of the Contracting Parties and the Agreement Secretariat.

From the Secretariat's perspective, the Communication Strategy has proven to be a useful tool, which has guided the Secretariat in its communication activities and has clearly helped it to find and define its role as the process facilitator - as the "spider in the web" of flyway conservation for the African-Eurasian region since MOP3.

The Communication Strategy included an annexed Communication Action Plan for the period 2006 -2009 which contained an ambitious set of activities which were to be funded entirely through voluntary contributions. However, looking back only a very limited number of these activities could be undertaken in the years 2006 - 2009 due to lack of resources and those which have been implemented were primarily based on Secretariat staff time and not directly dependent on additional funding. The Secretariat's focus during the period from 2006 to 2010 was primarily the implementation of and fundraising for the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project. Furthermore, the adoption of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009 - 2017, the African Initiative as well as the growth of World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) into an international campaign all took place after the adoption of the Communication Strategy.

Contracting Parties are invited to consider initiating a coordinated revision process for the existing Communication Strategy at MOP5, which would align the Strategy with the objectives and activities of the Strategic Plan 2009–2017 as adopted by Resolution 4.7, the Plan of Action for Africa ,if adopted under Resolution 5.XX¹, and to integrate and take full advantage of existing initiatives and tools such as the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign and the communication and capacity building- related outputs of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project. In addition, the Secretariat feels, that the future implementation of the Communication Strategy as well as its revision could be better supported, through the establishment of an expert working group on CEPA in the Technical Committee, the nomination of national CEPA experts as well as through increased funding earmarked specifically for the implementation of the Communication Strategy.

¹ See draft resolution AEWA/MOP5 DR9 *Implementation of the African Initiative for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and Their Habitats in Africa*

I. Introduction

1. At its third session, which took place from 23 to 27 October 2005 in Dakar, Senegal, the Meeting of the Parties adopted the Communication Strategy for AEWA under **Resolution 3.10**.

As laid down in this Resolution, the Meeting of the Parties:

- a) *Adopts* the Communication Strategy, contained in Annex 1 to this Resolution as an instrument to effectively address the conservation of waterbirds on the flyway level;
- b) *Instructs* the AEWA Secretariat to implement the Communication Strategy and to develop it taking into account resources available, to review its effectiveness on a regular basis and to report on its implementation to the meetings of the Standing Committee and to the 4th Meeting of the Parties;
- c) *Further instructs* the Secretariat to undertake specific efforts to obtain additional resources for the implementation of the Communication Strategy;
- d) *Urges* Contracting Parties, donors and private sector sponsors to provide supplementary financial support to enable the Secretariat to realize all identified activities of the Strategy;
- e) *Invites* all Parties, Range States and other stakeholders along the African-Eurasian Flyway to support the implementation of the Communication Strategy at the global, regional, national or local levels, as appropriate, with the expertise, networks, skills and resources at their disposal;
- f) *Encourages* all Contracting Parties to host AEWA Exchange Centres for their region, as stipulated in the Communication Strategy;
- g) *Further encourages* all representatives of Contracting Parties and partner organisations to envisage functioning as ambassadors to AEWA in order to help the Secretariat with the recruitment of new Parties to AEWA.

2. The operational paragraph of Resolution 3.10 makes clear that implementation of the Communication Strategy is a shared responsibility, particularly of the Contracting Parties and the Agreement Secretariat. It also underlines that the implementation of the Communication Strategy is dependent on available resources.

3. As requested by Resolution 3.10, a comprehensive overview of the implementation of the Communication Strategy (Document AEWA/MOP 4.18) was prepared by the AEWA Secretariat for the 4th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP4), which took place from 15 to 19 September 2008 in Antananarivo, Madagascar. The Communication Action Plan was not revised and extended at MOP4, as its content was still largely valid and has been kept as a guide by the Secretariat on communication activities beyond 2009.

4. An update on the implementation of the Communication Strategy was also prepared for the 6th Meeting of the Standing Committee (Document AEWA/StC 6.7) which took place from 16 to 17 June 2010 in The Hague, the Netherlands as well as for the 7th Meeting of the Standing Committee (Document AEWA/StC 7.8) which took place from 26 to 27 November 2011 in Bergen, Norway. These documents give a detailed overview of progress made by the Agreement Secretariat in the implementation of the Communication Strategy since its adoption by MOP3 in October 2005.

5. This document provides a short summary and review of the effectiveness of the Communication Strategy and the Communication Action Plan 2006 – 2009 and will present arguments in support of possibly initiating a revision process of the Communication Strategy at MOP5.

II. Review of the Effectiveness of the Communication Strategy

6. The AEWA Communication Strategy adopted by MOP3 in October 2005 aims to provide a framework to help guide AEWA Parties, Range States, Partners and the AEWA Secretariat in their efforts to raise awareness and understanding generally of conservation issues concerning migratory waterbirds and more specifically to raise awareness on the provisions and objectives of the Agreement itself. It also contains guidance on how to improve the internal communication among the formal bodies of AEWA, develop mechanisms for external communication and cooperation between AEWA stakeholders, build regional capacity for communication and increase awareness of AEWA.

7. From the Secretariat's point of view, the strategy has helped to put communication efforts undertaken by the Secretariat since MOP3 into perspective and has provided a useful structure for communication activities undertaken by the Secretariat. Perhaps more importantly, the Communication Strategy as adopted by MOP3 has helped the Secretariat find and define its role as the process facilitator - as the "spider in the web" of flyway conservation for the African-Eurasian region, which is one of the key concepts of the Communication Strategy.

8. The Strategy's usefulness as a tool for Contracting Parties and AEWA partners is more difficult to assess, as the Secretariat has received very little information from Contracting Parties or partner organisations on activities undertaken to implement the Communication Strategy over the years. As the following section on the Communication Action Plan 2006-2009 will also show, very little funds have come in to directly support the implementation of the Communication Strategy to date.

III. Communication Capacity

9. Before starting to report back on the progress made on the implementation of the Communication Strategy from the Secretariat's perspective, it would be important to note how the Communication Strategy refers to the capacity for communication, which determines the extent to which the Communication Strategy can be implemented. This capacity for communication can be assessed in terms of human resources, technical expertise and financial resources.

10. As already mentioned above, since the adoption of the Communication Strategy at MOP3, the financial resources required for its implementation have been fully dependent on voluntary contributions by the Contracting Parties or organizations and very few funds have come in to support its implementation to date.

11. In terms of human resources, the capacity for communication at the Secretariat increased following MOP3, particularly due to the provision of a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) dedicated to Communication & Information Management provided by the German Government from September 2005 to October 2008 and the creation of the post of Associate Information Officer as agreed by MOP4, which was filled in February 2009 (superseding the JPO position). In addition, by the end of 2006, the post of Information Assistant (part-time) as agreed by MOP3 was also filled. This part-time position, while significantly increasing the capacity for communication of the Secretariat, still turned out to be insufficient for the needs, and the Secretariat has tried to increase the actual working time of the Information Assistant when financially possible.

12. Although the implementation of the Strategy is the responsibility of the Associate Information Officer and supported by the part-time Information Assistant, it should be underlined that all other AEWA staff members are also involved and contribute to the implementation of the Communication Strategy, albeit for probably only a few hours a week. While the overall technical expertise and capacity related to communication within the Secretariat has increased since MOP3, it is hoped that in coming years the level of technical expertise and actual time available to implement the Communication Strategy will continue to increase. In addition, the relevant expertise spread across the Secretariat related to communication, capacity building, fundraising and conducting trainings needs to be further mobilized and focussed to assist with the implementation of the Communication Strategy.

IV. Communication Action Plan for 2006 - 2009

13. The original Communication Strategy adopted by MOP3 contained a number of specific communication and capacity building-related activities, upon which the Secretariat should focus in the period 2006 – 2009. These activities were attached to the strategy as Annex II and listed in the AEWA Communication Action Plan 2006 – 2009. With Resolution 3.10, Parties instructed the Secretariat to implement the Communication Strategy (incl. the Communication Action Plan) to the extent possible taking into account resources available.

14. The total budget for all activities listed in the Communication Action Plan for the period 2006-2009 was estimated at **502,250 EUR**. However, from the moment the Strategy was adopted by MOP3, the implementation of these activities has been fully dependent on voluntary contributions from Contracting Parties and other potential donors and few funds have come in to support these activities to date. The Secretariat's fundraising activities during the period from 2006 to 2010 were primarily focused on the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project.

15. Furthermore, many of the activities outlined in the Communication Action Plan that were not budgeted for, were assigned as tasks for the incumbent Junior Professional Officer (JPO) provided by the Government of Germany – assuming that he would be able to allocate 100 per cent of his working time towards the implementation of the Communication Strategy. However, it should be noted that since 2005, both the JPO position and subsequently the position of Associate Information Officer have been divided – with 50 per cent of the Officer's time allocated to supporting communication activities of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project. These factors are important to consider when reviewing the status of implementation, especially with regard to activities which were assigned to the Secretariat.

V. Status of Implementation

16. Below is a detailed overview of the status of the implementation of individual activities of the Communication Action Plan 2006 – 2009 as of March 2012. The table lists all activities, the total allocated budget estimated for each activity for the 2006-2009 period as adopted through Resolution 3.10 at MOP3, an initial assessment of the actual funds received earmarked for the specific activity, as well as a summary on the status of implementation of each activity from the perspective of the Secretariat. In addition, the table includes a column indicating whether or not a specific activity has been included in the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 and whether or not the activity has been considered for inclusion in the International Implementation Tasks (IIT) 2012 – 2015.

**AEWA COMMUNICATION ACTION PLAN 2006 – 2009
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

AEWA Communication Action Plan 2006-2009 (Status of Implementation as at March 2012)					
ACTIVITY (As listed in the Communication Action Plan 2006-2009)	Total Est. Funds Required	Funds Received & Donor	Status of Implementation / Comments by the Secretariat	Included in Strategic Plan 2009 - 2017	Included in draft IITs 2012-2015
	2006 - 2009	2006-2009			
1. Internal Communication					
<u>Objective 1:</u> to stimulate and increase the effective internal communication and exchange among the formal governing bodies of the Agreement					
Activity 1.1. Interactivity of meetings	€ 18,450	€ 0	Due to lack of resources both in financial and human terms, progress made regarding the implementation of this activity has been limited.	NO	NO
Activity 1.2. Interactivity in-between meetings	€ 5,760	€ 2000 (Germany)	<p>The Secretariat has established designated web pages for the AEWA Technical (TC) and Standing Committees (StC) on its public website. The Secretariat also regularly reports back on meetings on the public website, including on decisions taken and on future meetings.</p> <p>Technical Committee Workspace</p> <p>A new web-based interactive working space for the TC has been developed by the Secretariat, enabling online discussion and better archiving of TC-related work. It provides a central platform for online collaboration and supports the work and the communication of the TC between meetings. It has been operational since January 2009.</p>	NO	NO

Activity 1.3. Evaluation regional representation	€ 0	€ 0	Progress made regarding the implementation of this activity has been limited.	NO	NO
TOTAL: Internal Communication	€ 24,210	€ 2000			
2. External Communication					
<u>Objective 2:</u> to strengthen and/or develop mechanisms for effective external communication and cooperation between and among the AEWA stakeholders and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat					
Activity 2.1. Regional MOP (in 5 regions)	€ 135,750	€ 50,000 (€ 30,000+ € 20,000) (France, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, UNEP)	<p>Although funds have generally been scarce for the implementation of this objective, funds received prior to MOP4 enabled the Secretariat to conduct a first-ever regional workshop/meeting for AEWA Focal Points from African countries (Activity 2.1). The two-day negotiation training for Anglophone countries in Africa directly preceded the 4th Meeting of the Parties and was carried out in close cooperation with the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions and Law (UNEP/DELIC).</p> <p>A similar three-day Preparatory Negotiation Workshop for Africa took place from 26-28 October 2011 in Entebbe, Uganda. The workshop targeted both CMS and AEWA national Focal Points in the African region and was jointly organized by the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with support from the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DELIC) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).</p> <p>The AEWA Secretariat is organizing an African regional preparatory workshop (pre-MOP) scheduled to take place from 12-13 May 2012 in La Rochelle, France, just before the AEWA MOP5 (14-18 May 2012).</p> <p>The pre-MOP workshop is being made possible through a voluntary contribution from the ENRTP Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - Directorate General for the Environment and UNEP and will</p>	NO	NO

			focus on consolidating the region's input towards revising and validating the draft Plan of Action (PoA) for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in Africa.		
Activity 2.2. Exchange Centres for AEWA	€ 12,000	€ 0	With regard to Activity 2.2 it should be noted, that the four Regional Centres established in the context of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project (located in Dakar, Almaty & Moscow, Nairobi and Amman) have, in many ways, functioned as regional hubs for the exchange of information and capacity building on AEWA over the course of the project 2006-2010. However, with the conclusion of this GEF- funded project in 2010, more funds would urgently be needed to allow these Regional Centres to continue to operate as “AEWA Exchange Centres” as foreseen in Activity 2.2.	YES	NO
Activity 2.3. Engage AEWA Ambassadors	€ 14,000	€ 0	OMPO continues to play a role as AEWA Ambassador and is promoting the Agreement particularly in the Baltic States, Russia, Malta and Morocco. Also BirdLife International, CIC and Wetlands International are promoting the Agreement whenever appropriate. The WOW Project and the resulting WOW Partnership Agreement will also likely continue to strengthen the role played by both BirdLife International and Wetlands International in this respect.	NO	NO
TOTAL: External Communication	€ 161,750	€ 50,000			
3. Capacity Building					
<u>Objective 3:</u> to build regional capacity for communication					
Activity 3.1. Regional Training of Trainers	€ 156,900	€ 0	So far, no activities have been undertaken directly by the Secretariat to implement activities 3.1 & 3.2 due to a lack of resources. However, it should be noted that the capacity-building component of the WOW Project included several activities closely related to Objective 3. For example, since MOP4 a number of WOW Training of	YES	YES, if adopted to include CS elements.

			<p>Trainers (ToT) courses have taken place. In addition, the WOW Flyway Training Kit has now been produced (printed in 2010), which is a unique training resource specifically designed to build capacity to plan, implement, monitor and engage in effective flyway-scale conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands in the AEWA region. The tool also includes a chapter on communication and is available in English, French, Arabic and Russian and includes three modules with comprehensive text, case studies and exercises supported by ready-to-use presentations, as well as accompanying CDs (including one with all of the most important AEWA documents) and a range of additional material.</p> <p>Although funding is still needed to implement ToT workshops, especially ones focusing on “strengthening capacity for communication among contracting parties” called for in Objective 3, the Flyway Training Kit and the capacity building and training network established through the WOW Project, could provide an excellent basis and resource for future ToT activities being carried out to meet Objective 3 of the Communication Strategy.</p> <p>In addition, activities foreseen under the African Initiative will also help support the implementation of Objective 3.</p>		
Activity 3.2. Facilitate national follow-up	€ 6,750	€ 0	Dependent on activity 3.1 above. However, it should be noted that the figures allocated to this activity are unrealistic. To facilitate at least three follow-up trainings for CEPA at the national level further funds will be required.	YES	NO
TOTAL: Capacity Building	€ 163,650	€ 0			

4. AEWA Awareness Raising

Objective 4: to increase knowledge and awareness of AEWA, its added value and its objectives

Activity 4.1. AEWA Website	€ 10,880	€ 0	<p>The current AEWA website is being regularly updated and news on current activities and projects are regularly featured. It should be noted, that the maintenance of the website is a true team effort involving several AEWA staff members and its overall management is the responsibility of the AEWA Information Officer.</p> <p>However, since the last re-design of the website was carried out in 2005 it is becoming outdated from a technological standpoint. The current AEWA website is purely HTML-based and has no database or web-content management system lying behind it. It also does not make use of many new interactive features which have become available in the years since it was developed, such as RSS and other Web 2.0 type features. However, the Secretariat is hesitant to embark on re-designing the AEWA website, without a clear mandate from its Parties and sufficient time and financial resources allocated to such a project. The Secretariat is also supportive of the development of a future CMS Family Website.</p>	YES	NO
Activity 4.2. AEWA Newsletter	€ 108,000	€ 0 In-kind support from Germany	<p>Since MOP3 the AEWA E-Newsletter has evolved to become one of the primary communication tools to reach out to the currently 4000+ contacts in the AEWA database. The E-Newsletter is produced entirely in-house by the Secretariat on a bi-monthly basis and provides a summary of AEWA-related news and events. A total of 31 E-Newsletters have been sent out since the availability of the tool in 2006.</p> <p>The Communication Strategy envisioned the production of two hard copy Newsletters per year. Funding is primarily needed to cover the design, translation and production costs. The last hard copy Newsletter was produced in-house and printed using funding not specifically allocated to this activity.</p>	YES	NO
Activity 4.3. E-discussions	€ 1,760	€ 0	<p>One of the tasks of the Information Assistant was to improve the current address database and to establish an email distribution list. This has meanwhile taken place and is of great importance due to the fact that this list is used for distribution of the regular AEWA</p>	YES	NO

			E-Newsletter. Yet, no progress was able to be made regarding the establishment of an e-discussion forum due to lack of resources. If the funding was made available, the Secretariat would be in a position to develop this resource fairly quickly (within 2 months); however maintaining such an active e-discussion forum would be more time-consuming and probably best outsourced.		
Activity 4.4. Accession guidelines	€ 0	€ 0 In-kind support from Luxembourg	These guidelines for accession have been drafted and the Secretariat was in the position, due to the generous support of the Government of Luxembourg, to translate and print these guidelines, which were originally only available in English, into Russian, Arabic and French. Since then the guidelines for accession have been distributed regularly to countries that are in the process of acceding to AEWA.	YES	N/A
Activity 4.5. Toolkit for national level	€ 32,000	€ 0	Work is ongoing to develop an AEWA Toolkit. Many of the materials to be included in this toolkit are now available (DVD film and a general PowerPoint presentation on AEWA, CD-Rom with all available AEWA Documents (being updated on a regular basis), Flyway Posters and several new AEWA Publications). In addition, the WOW Flyway Training Kit published in May 2010 will likely become a primary resource for both training activities and for raising awareness on AEWA. The Flyway Training Kit contains a CD Rom with all AEWA materials, publications and official documents as well as an entire module dedicated to communications. The Secretariat has also made an effort to re-produce and re-print many of the key documents such as the Agreement Text and Strategic Plan using the new house-style of AEWA. In this way, the materials will all be aligned to fit into the AEWA Toolkit.	YES	NO
TOTAL: AEWA Awareness Raising	€ 152,640	€ 0			
<u>SUMMARY</u>					
1. Internal Communication	€ 24,210	€ 2,000			
2. External Communication	€ 161,750	€ 50,000			
3. Capacity Building	€ 163,650	€ 0			
4. AEWA Awareness Raising	€ 152,640	€ 0			

TOTAL:	€ 502,250	€ 52,000 (10% of € 502,250)			
	Funds Required	Funds Received			

4. Proposal for Revision of the Communication Strategy

17. Looking at the status table of the implementation of the Communication Action Plan 2006 -2009, the Secretariat believes there is clearly a need to rethink and update the existing Communication Strategy and to start a revision process, which will result in a new, up-to-date and realistic set of priority communication activities for the Agreement. These should reflect the current realities, capacity and true financial resources available to carry out the identified communication, training and capacity-building activities by Contracting Parties, the Secretariat and other stakeholders and partners to support the implementation of AEWA, especially with regard to Article III of the Agreement and chapter 6 of the Action Plan both on the national, regional and international level.

18. Similarly to the Quick Scan carried out in 2004, which provided the basis for the existing Communication Strategy and Communication Action Plan 2006-2009, the revision process should ideally be led by an independent consultant and closely involve the Agreement Secretariat, the Technical Committee, the Standing Committee and nominated national CEPA focal points from across the Agreement area. The Secretariat also believes that such a revision process would be better supported, through the establishment of a working group on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) and the nomination of a thematic expert on CEPA within the AEWA Technical Committee, to work with and help guide the implementation and revision process for the Communication Strategy.

Key Documents and Activities to Consider in any Future Revision Process

19. Provided Contracting Parties agree to a revision of the Communication Strategy as adopted by Resolution 3.10 at the 5th Meeting of the Parties (MOP5), the Secretariat would consider it important that a future revision process would take into account the following strategic documents and communication related activities:

AEWA Strategic Plan 2009 – 2017

20. The Strategic Plan aims to provide the context for implementation of the Agreement, putting forward a medium-term perspective, by setting the overall vision, goals, the objectives and targets for a period of nine years. The current Strategic Plan was developed for and adopted by MOP4 through Resolution 4.7 in 2008. It is valid for a period of nine years, from 2009 to 2017 and one of its objectives (Objective 4) is specifically dedicated to improving Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) and includes a number of priority activities taken directly from the current Communication Action Plan 2006-2009.

21. As it is expected that the Strategic Plan will continue to provide the overall coherent and strategic guidance to the Contracting Parties, other stakeholders and the Secretariat in their endeavours to implement the Agreement, any revision of the Communication Strategy should take the Strategic Plan into account. In fact, the two strategic documents should continuously be aligned with each other at any point of revision.

22. The Strategic Plan underlines that the core of flyway conservation is collaboration and cooperation between stakeholders along these flyways, both within countries as well as internationally. Communication plays a key role in fostering and supporting this international collaboration and cooperation and the current Communication Strategy captures this element well. The two documents and any identified CEPA-related activities listed in each document should remain closely aligned; so as to enable AEWA to continue to strengthen its ability to facilitate this cooperation at all levels.

International Implementation Tasks - Inclusion of CEPA Priorities

23. The International Implementation Tasks (IIT) set the medium-term priorities for international cooperation activities for implementation of the Agreement and are primarily updated by the Technical Committee and adopted at each Meeting of the Parties for a period of 3 to 4 years. The IITs should also include activities identified to support the implementation of the Communication Strategy; hence selected IIT priority activities listed under the "Education and Information" IIT section should always include activities identified in the Communication Action Plan.

AEWA National Reporting Process - Monitoring Implementation of the Communication Strategy

24. Since the adoption of the first triennial national report format for AEWA at MOP1, Parties have repeatedly acknowledged the importance of national reporting as a means to monitor implementation of the Agreement. It is generally expected that the implementation of the Agreement and its Action Plan will be enhanced by regular review of national implementation through a process of national reporting. The national report format should include more targeted questions, which also help monitor the implementation of the Communication Strategy on the national level. Hence, any revision of the Communication Strategy should also consider the national reporting process as a means of monitoring implementation of the Communication Strategy and as a potential way of sharing CEPA-related information, knowledge and experiences amongst AEWA Parties. Any revision of the triennial national report format should also consider maintaining and possibly extending the reporting elements to monitor the implementation of the Communication Strategy.

Plan of Action for Africa & African Initiative

25. With the adoption of the African Initiative by MOP4 and the recruitment of a designated Coordinator (made possible through a voluntary contribution from the French Government) a Plan of Action (PoA) for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in Africa is being prepared for possible adoption by MOP5, which includes activities aligned to both the Strategic Plan 2009 – 2017 and with the Communication Strategy. It is expected that implementation of the Plan of Action for Africa will be linked to and help contribute towards the implementation of the Communication Strategy in Africa, especially with regard to Objective 3 (Capacity Building). Any revision of the Communication Strategy will have to be clearly aligned with the priorities and activities agreed by Parties in the framework of the Plan of Action for Africa, which will be presented for consideration for adoption at MOP5.

International Single Species Action Plans

26. Raising public awareness of the need for the protection of species and their habitats, as well as on the threats they face and compiling and disseminating this information widely on the national and regional level should be a key conservation activity included in most, if not all AEWA Single Species Action Plans in future. For example, raising public awareness, especially amongst hunters, landowners and farmers is already one of the conservation measures outlined in the LWfG SSAP. Increasing public awareness of the need for protecting the Lesser Flamingo and its habitats, especially around critical sites such as Lake Natron is also seen as an important conservation measure identified in the SSAP for this species. However, clearly more needs to be done to support these awareness-raising efforts and Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) activities should become a more integral part of the measures identified in the SSAPs for the conservation of the species and their habitats. Not only should a revised Communication Strategy address this need, it should also help provide a framework for the development of CEPA-related materials and activities especially targeted to support and guide the stakeholders working together to implement AEWA International Single Species Action Plans.

Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways

27. One of the most important factors not foreseen in the current Communication Strategy is the overall positive impact the *Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project* has had on the implementation of AEWA and in terms of promoting and implementing the concept of flyway conservation in the AEWA region. The project has not only contributed towards the implementation of the Communication Strategy in some areas, but it has also developed the network and capacity which could, funding permitting, be used in the years to come to conduct some of the training activities envisioned (but not yet implemented) in the original Communication Strategy. For example, both the Flyway Training Kit (FTK) and the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool are two important outputs of the project which will remain highly relevant as tools supporting the implementation of AEWA. A revision of the Communication Strategy should take into account the achievements of the WOW Project and facilitate the use of these two main outputs of the project and maintain and strengthen the network built through the flyway project.

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)

28. Another important activity which was not foreseen in the current Communication Strategy which has significantly helped to increase awareness on AEWA and international migratory waterbird conservation is World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD). Initiated by the AEWA Secretariat in 2006, the global campaign has helped to increase awareness on AEWA both within and outside the AEWA region in unprecedented ways. While the AEWA Secretariat has taken the lead in developing the annual campaign, it is a joint activity organized with the CMS Secretariat and which is being supported by a number of other key AEWA partners, including BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Secretariat of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and UNEP. WMBD has grown into a major UN-backed, international awareness-raising campaign dedicated to migratory birds. In 2011, over 200 separate WMBD events which took place in 64 countries were registered on the WMBD website (www.worldmigratorybirdday.org) and the campaign received unprecedented international media coverage, also thanks to the support of the partners.

Flyway Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats

29. In June 2010, the WOW Project partner organizations, Wetlands International, BirdLife International, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Secretariat and the AEWA Secretariat, signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) to continue the partnership that has been built up under the WOW Project. The purpose of the MoC is to translate WOW's achievements into a long-term, collaborative, flyway-scale programme. Any revision of the Communication Strategy should make sure that planned activities foreseen in any future Communication Strategy take into account the ongoing and planned work of the Flyway Partnership, especially work aiming to build on and consolidate the two main WOW Project outputs the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool and Flyway Training Kit (FTK).

CMS Family Website Project

30. As part of the overall approach of the CMS Secretariat Management to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the CMS Family as a whole and to improve its visibility, also stimulated by the Future Shape process, the idea was launched to develop a common CMS Family Website. This idea was further elaborated during the CMS Family retreat in March 2011, also attended by staff from the AEWA Secretariat. It was agreed there to establish a Working Group of members of the Bonn-based Secretariats, with the aim to improve and better harmonize the Convention and Agreements websites. One of the initial outcomes of this process, which has been strongly supported by the AEWA Secretariat, was the recognition of the need to develop a joint web-based platform to improve communication about the activities of the different Agreements and the Convention and to clearly showcase their relationship to one another.

31. Provided that funding is secured, implementing the ambitious project will require considerable input and time from communications staff at the Secretariat. Hence, any revision of the Communication Strategy should also consider the development of the new CMS Family Website and consider both the opportunities and consequences that come with it.

Increased Cooperation with other MEAs on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)

32. Last but not least, a future revision of the Communication Strategy should also look closely at other existing international CEPA programmes and Communication Strategies currently being implemented in the frameworks of other Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs). The revised Communication Strategy and any future AEWA communication and CEPA activities should not be planned in isolation, but should build on what other MEAs, particularly the biodiversity-related MEAs (for example CBD, CITES, CMS, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands) have done with respect to establishing and implementing their individual CEPA activities and programmes. Considerable experience in the area of CEPA already exists and any revision of the Communication Strategy should tap into this experience and allow AEWA to build on, cooperate with and link to it.

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

33. Taking into account the status of implementation of the Communication Action Plan 2006 – 2009 and the other important developments since MOP3 when the Communication Strategy was adopted, the Secretariat would like to recommend that a coordinated revision process for the existing Communication Strategy be initiated at MOP5. To this purpose, the Secretariat is submitting to this meeting a draft resolution on the “*Implementation and Revision of the Communication Strategy*”, with the request of reviewing it and approving its transmission to MOP5 for consideration (AEWA/MOP5 DR5).

34. The goal of the revision would be to align the Strategy with the objectives and activities of the Strategic Plan 2009 – 2017 as adopted by Resolution 4.7 and the Plan of Action for Africa if adopted under draft resolution AEWA/MOP5 DR9², and integrate and take full advantage of existing initiative and tools such as the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign and the communication and capacity building-related outputs of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project.

35. In addition, the Secretariat feels, that the future implementation of the Communication Strategy as well as its revision could be better supported, through the establishment of an expert working group on CEPA in the Technical Committee, the nomination of national CEPA focal points as well as through increased funding earmarked specifically for the implementation of the Communication Strategy.

Actions Requested by the Meeting of the Parties:

1. To take note of this report and the progress made regarding the implementation of the Communication Strategy.
2. To review and adopt the draft Resolution on “*Implementation and Revision of the Communication Strategy*” (AEWA/MOP5 DR5).

² See draft resolution AEWA/MOP5 DR9 *Implementation of the African Initiative for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and Their Habitats in Africa*