



## 6<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

9-14 November 2015, Bonn, Germany

*“Making flyway conservation happen”*

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### REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

#### INTRODUCTION

The present report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period between June 2012 and August 2015.

This report is divided into seven sections:

1. Staffing and Organization of the Secretariat;
2. General Management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organizations;
3. Communications, Information Management and Outreach;
4. Science, Implementation and Compliance;
5. Capacity Building;
6. Project Development; and
7. Other Activities and Outputs.

Activities reported in detail in other MOP6 documents are only mentioned briefly here, with a reference to the relevant substantive document containing more information.

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat, which includes responding to incoming mail, maintaining the Secretariat's extensive network of contacts, internal meetings with CMS, UNEP and/or UN Head of Agencies etc. are not specifically mentioned in this report.

#### 1. STAFFING AND ORGANIZATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

##### Staffing Changes

###### Regular Staff

Mr Bert Lenten stepped down as Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat on 1 May 2011 to become the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat. Subsequently Dr Marco Barbieri was nominated as Acting Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, entering on duty on 2 May 2011 and remaining in this role until October 2013. Mr Lenten then assumed the function of Acting Executive Secretary until May 2014. After this three-year interim period, the new Executive Secretary of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, Dr Jacques Trouvilliez, entered on duty on 2 June 2014.

The position of the Associate Programme Officer (Coordinator of the African Initiative) was filled on 4 May 2015 after a long recruitment process. As instructed by Resolution 5.21, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat secured a voluntary contribution from the Federal Office for the Environment in Switzerland to supplement the 50% approved for this position in the core budget, to a full-time position until December 2015. The Secretariat is grateful to the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) for this generous three-year commitment.

The position of the Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination of implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan was secured for an additional three years until 2017. The Secretariat is grateful to the Norwegian Environmental Agency for its continuing support of this important position.

The position of the Programme Assistant for the African Initiative has been generously funded for three years (until December 2015) by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB).

#### Temporary Staff

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat contracted a part-time Programme Assistant to support the logistical preparation of MOP6 from 1 July 2014 until 31 December 2015.

#### Interns

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat participates in the CMS Family Internship Programme. In the framework of this programme, the following interns supported the work of the Secretariat in the period under consideration:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Main tasks carried out in the period</b>
Ms Lidia Tiflova	Russian	Assisted in preparing the LWfG meeting in Nov 2012, Greece
Ms Carolina Corrales Duque	Colombian	Assisted in compiling the AEWA Popular series publication Migratory birds and Powerline Grids; supported the AEWA SGF and prepared summaries of nine ISSAPs for the AEWA website 2012-2013
Ms Ann-Kathrin Scheuerle	German	Provided support to the organisation of the WMBD campaign
Ms Melanie Jakuttek	German	Provided support to the organisation of the WMBD campaign and its promotion through social media - 2013
Ms Jessica Roy	French	Provided support towards the AEWA Acting Executive Secretary, translations into French and document drafting
Ms Helena Coelho	Brazilian	Supported the production of promotional videos for WMBD 2014 and an AEWA Training of Trainers workshop in Kenya
Mr Martin Bangratz	Austrian	Provided support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communication and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with a special focus, on the WMBD 2015 campaign, social media and the design and production of the AEWA MOP6/20 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary logo
Ms Weiji Ma	Chinese	Provided support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communications and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with a special focus on the work related to the global WMBD 2015 campaign
Mr Lukas Bickhove	German	Provided support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communications and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with a special focus on social media support to the global WMBD 2015 campaign
Mr Brendan Shepard	French/ American	Provided support to the national reporting cycle to MOP6 – verification of national reports and correspondence with the designated national respondents
Ms Helga Karsten	Russian	Provided support to the work of the Joint Information Management, Communication and Outreach Unit of the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats, with

		a special focus on AEWA MOP6 communications (audio-visual, social media and press work)
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## **Organisation of the Secretariat**

The organisation of the Secretariat presented below is as at 1<sup>st</sup> September 2015, taking into account the above-mentioned staffing changes which occurred during the current triennium.

The individual staff members and units work closely as a team, interacting with each other on cross-cutting issues on a daily basis; they are divided into four major areas of work (as described in Annex 1 – Organisational Structure and Annex II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat).

Each staff member has an annual work plan, which is revised mid-term and approved by his/her supervisor. All the work plans are examined by the Executive Secretary in order to increase the synergies between the units and avoid duplication of efforts. The Secretariat nonetheless faces a number of challenges in the delivery of its mandate and is rather stretched. This is due to the ever-increasing extent of services to be delivered: without the extension of the part-time positions funded by voluntary contributions and the support of interns, the Secretariat would not have been in a position to deliver the requested services and the documents to be reviewed at MOP6.

The core budget covers 6.75 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs), while voluntary contributions and savings have allowed the addition of 3.25 full-time equivalent positions until 31 December 2015. The Secretariat currently comprises 11 staff members (see Annex 2), 6 Professional Staff (P staff) and 5 General Staff (G staff).

The four units within the Secretariat are:

**Executive Management Unit** - composed of one P4, one P2, one G5 and 0.3 temporary G4

The Executive Secretary is responsible for the overall management, policy development, liaison with Parties, depositary government, host country, the Standing Committee, the CMS Family, UNEP and other biodiversity-related MEAs and the recruitment of new Parties.

The other staff members of this unit assists the Executive Secretary with the management of human and financial resources, in close collaboration with the UNEP/CMS Administration and Financial Management Unit (AFMU), fundraising, office logistics (such as IT-related issues and procurement), planning of missions, logistical preparation of Meetings of the Parties and Meetings of the Standing Committee, drafting and control of meeting documents, and legal affairs in liaison with UNEP and with the depositary.

**Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit** - composed of one P3, one voluntary-contribution-funded P2 and one G4 (0.75 covered by the core budget and 0.25 covered by savings)

This unit directly supports the Technical Committee and organises its meetings and facilitates its work, including through the moderation of the online TC Workspace.

The unit leads on most of the implementation-related tasks: management and support of the International species working groups and International species experts groups which coordinate the implementation of AEWA Action and Management Plans, development and management of implementation related projects (see below section 4), production or supervision of various documents including amendments of the annexes of the Agreement, mandatory reports (such as Conservation Status Report, see document AEWA/MOP6.14.), Species Action and Management Plans (see document AEWA/MOP6.16 and documents AEWA/MOP6.25 to 32) and Conservation Guidelines (see for example documents AEWA/MOP6.35 to 6.37).

The Unit also manages the operations of the *Implementation Review Process* (IRP) (see document AEWA/MOP6.17) as well as the document workflow for the meetings of the governing bodies (MOP, StC and TC) and deals with the report writing for the Meetings of the TC and StC.

The unit provides the overall supervision of the AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF).

It also coordinates the development of strategic and operative documents, such as the AEWA Strategic Plan, including facilitation of the monitoring of progress made in its implementation. Support to the national reporting process is provided through development and revision of national reporting formats and facilitation of analysis of submitted national reports.

Further, the unit regularly organizes a wide range of meetings and workshops related to various implementation tasks and also produces the AEWA Technical Series and selected Popular Series issues for publishing.

**African Initiative Unit** - currently composed of one P2 (0.50 core-budget funded, 0.50 funded by voluntary financial contributions) and one G4 (dependent on voluntary financial contributions)

The main task of this unit, in close collaboration with the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit, is to promote the implementation of the Plan of Action for Africa (for more details see document AEWA/MOP6.11). This involves the organization of a wide range of AEWA meetings in the African region (including the African Pre-MOP meetings, capacity-building workshops including Training of Trainers workshops on flyway conservation and training workshops on the roles and responsibilities of National Focal Points, as well as workshops promoting accession to the Agreement), the management and administration of the AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF) in the African region, support with fundraising for activities in the African region, providing advisory services to the AEWA National Focal Points and other stakeholders in Africa, as well as the recruitment of new Parties in Africa.

**Communication Unit** - composed of one P2 and one G4 (0.5 covered by the core budget and 0.3 covered by savings)

Since January 2014, this unit has become part of a pilot common AEWA/CMS unit for communication, information management and outreach, allowing some specialisation among the staff in the areas of communications, website and information management (including management of various shared tools such as the online national reporting system and coordination of the national reporting process), as well as press, design and editorial services, special events and social media support to both Secretariats (for more details see section 3 below and document AEWA MOP6.10). The common unit is responsible for the organisation of the annual World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign.

## 2. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

### **Recruitment of Parties**

Since MOP5, ten new Contracting Parties have acceded to AEWA (nine of which from the African region), bringing the total number of Parties to 75.

Zimbabwe became a Contracting Party as of 1 June 2012. Gabon and Morocco became Contracting Parties as of 1 December 2012. Swaziland became a Contracting Party as of January 2013. Côte d'Ivoire and Iceland became Contracting Parties as of 1 June 2013. Burkina Faso became a Contracting Party as of 1 October 2013. Rwanda and Burundi became Contracting Parties respectively as of 1 September 2014 and 1 October 2014. Mauritania became a Contracting Party as of 1 May 2015.

In addition, significant progress has been made in the accession process of a number of African non-Party Range States. Details on the progress in the implementation of the African Initiative and AEWA Plan of Action for Africa are provided in document AEWA/MOP6.11.

An international conference '*New approaches towards Biodiversity conservation*' was held in Minsk, Belarus from 21 to 22 May 2015. The Executive Secretary participated in a round table discussion on AEWA chaired by the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection. The President of Belarus has meanwhile signed a decree for Belarus to join AEWA in January 2016.

### **Meetings of the AEWA Standing Committee**

Three Standing Committee meetings were held between MOP5 and MOP6. For the report of the activities of the Standing Committee, please see document AEWA/MOP6.6.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee meeting was held back-to-back with MOP5 on 18 May 2012 in La Rochelle, at the kind invitation of the Government of France. Information about the meeting is available on the AEWA website at:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/8th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

The 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Trondheim, Norway, on 18-19 September 2013, at the kind invitation of the Norwegian Environment Agency. Information about the meeting is available at:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/9th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

The 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Kampala, Uganda on 8-10 July 2015, at the kind invitation of the Ministry for Environment, Tourism and Antiquities. Information about the meeting is available at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/10th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

### **Meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee**

Two meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee were held between MOP5 and MOP6. For a report of the activities of the Technical Committee, please see the document AEWA/MOP 6.7.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee was held in Accra, Ghana, on 27-30 August 2012, at the kind invitation of the Forestry Commission of Ghana (Wildlife Division). Information about the meeting is available at: [http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/tc\\_meetings/tc11/tc11.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/tc_meetings/tc11/tc11.htm)

The 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Technical Committee was organized by the Secretariat at the UN Campus in Bonn, Germany, from 3 to 6 March 2015. Information about the meeting is available at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/12th-meeting-aewa-technical-committee>.

### **Strategic Cooperation with other Organisations**

#### ***Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)***

A Resolution of Cooperation (ROC) between the CAFF and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariats was signed on 12 July 2012. The purpose of this ROC is to provide a framework for cooperation and understanding and to facilitate collaboration between the Parties to further their shared goals and objectives with regard to the conservation of migratory arctic birds and their habitats. Particularly the work of the CBird working group (Circumpolar Seabird Group) is of interest to AEWA. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is represented in the working group by the Technical Officer. Following the signing of a similar ROC between the CAFF and the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, a trilateral joint work programme CAFF/CMS/AEWA was developed.

As a first practical initiative to launch their cooperation, the organizations have been fundraising for a proposed project to develop an Arctic Breeding Migratory Bird Analysis based on the Arctic Species Trend Index (ASTI). The project aims to analyse existing trend data of populations of migratory birds breeding in the Arctic from several sources to better elucidate the patterns of decline and thus enable the identification of regions, taxa and habitats at most imminent threat and to prioritize conservation efforts. The UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats have been successful in securing funding from UNEP. The results were incorporated in the Arctic Biodiversity Assessment (ABA) published by CAFF in May 2013.

The first ever Arctic Biodiversity Congress was organised in Trondheim, Norway 2 - 4 December 2014 by the CAFF Secretariat and the Norwegian Environment Agency. The Congress was a follow-up to the ABA and brought together approximately 450 scientists, policy makers and other Arctic stakeholders to discuss the findings and key recommendations of the ABA as well as steps forward.

In addition to participating in several sessions on topics such as the role of wildlife harvest in Arctic biodiversity conservation and identifying and safeguarding protected/sensitive areas, the Secretariat facilitated the African-Eurasian Working Group under the CAFF Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) and the AEWAs Executive Secretary took part in a panel discussion on international cooperation and global conventions and their role in addressing Arctic biodiversity.

Following the Congress, a working meeting was held on 5 December 2014 with some 25 participants to finalise the flyway programmes of work under AMBI. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat facilitated the working session on the African-Eurasian flyway work programme which contains activities related to Guinea-Bissau, the Lesser White-fronted Goose and Icelandic afforestation.

The AMBI programme of work for all flyways was adopted at the Arctic Council Ministerial meeting on 29 April 2015 with the following message in the Ministerial declaration: “[*Considering*] the importance of the numerous Arctic breeding migratory bird species to communities in the Arctic and worldwide, welcome the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative Action Plan, and invite all participants and observers in the Arctic Council to contribute to this initiative to improve the health of migratory bird populations and the ecosystems on which they depend”.

#### Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats (aka Post-WOW Partnership)

The Flyway Partnership between BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was formed following the conclusion of the UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project, Wings Over Wetlands (WOW), in 2010. Its aim is to build on the effective institutional partnerships which were forged in the context of the GEF-sponsored project and to try to translate the achievements made under WOW into a long-term, collaborative, flyway-scale programme for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the wise use of wetlands along the African-Eurasian Flyway.

Since the first Partnership meeting in February 2011, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has taken on the role of Secretariat for the Flyway Partnership while BirdLife International has assumed the function of chair. An informal face-to-face meeting of the Flyway Partnership took place in November 2012 in Bonn hosted by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. Options are still being explored for convening a formal meeting which should *inter alia* re-state the functions of the partnership, clarify the role of members, the chair and the Secretariat, and devise a short-term work plan.

#### BirdLife International / Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

In May 2013 and May 2014, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat participated in meetings in the United Kingdom with BirdLife International and with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), where, amongst other things, the ideas for the Energy Task Force and the Pan-Mediterranean Task Force on Illegal Killing of Birds were conceived. The establishment of both Task Forces was agreed in November 2014 by the CMS COP11.

### **Fundraising**

Since January 2012, a total amount of € 1,550,323 has been pledged as voluntary financial contributions (€ 264,796 in 2012; € 405,288 in 2013; € 406,704 in 2014; € 473,535 from January to August 2015).

These voluntary contributions were earmarked for the coordination and implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose, the coordination of the African Initiative, the development of the communication strategy, the organisation of World Migratory Bird Day, the joint CMS Family/BirdLife International/International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) project for the development of a review and related guidelines on the subject of renewable energy technologies and migratory species and the Small Grants Fund 2012, the organisation of MOP6 and the production of various documents and deliverables for MOP6.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would like to express its appreciation for the financial support received towards the implementation of the Agreement since 2012. It should, at the same time, be noted that this level of support is still far below the amount estimated as necessary to implement the Agreement at a satisfactory level.

Fundraising has become increasingly difficult over recent years due to the ongoing global financial crisis. As the funds necessary for the preparation of all the mandatory documents could not be mobilized through voluntary contributions, the Secretariat was forced to cancel the Site Network Review and to postpone other documents which were tasked to the Technical Committee.

For the same reason, the Secretariat has decided to produce the mandatory report on the development and implementation of International Single Species Action and Management Plans in-house, despite the very limited human resources available.

### **Preparation of MOP6**

At the time of writing, preparations for the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP6) are in their final stage. In the absence of a host country, MOP6 will be held on the UN Campus in Bonn, making use of the available conference facilities.

Thanks to voluntary contributions received from the Governments of Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic and Luxembourg, the Secretariat will be in a position to cover all costs incurred for the logistical preparation of the meeting and part of the costs connected to funding the participation of sponsored delegates.

Details concerning the substantive and logistical preparations for the meeting can be found on the MOP6 webpage: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/6th-meeting-parties-aewa>

To highlight the overall goal of AEWA, i.e. to implement flyway conservation by facilitating collaboration and cooperation between stakeholders along these flyways, both nationally and internationally, the slogan chosen for the forthcoming MOP6 is: *Making Flyway Conservation Happen*.

### **Celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA**

The year 2015 is the year of the Agreement's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Secretariat has undertaken various activities to mark this important event:

#### Logo

The Secretariat has produced a combined logo for MOP6 and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary to mark these two special events.

#### 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Website Features

The Secretariat has developed a rolling “*people behind the scenes*” feature of more than 20 individual feature items. These are being published throughout the year 2015 to highlight the work and dedication of the many government officials, NGO representatives, experts, consultants and stakeholders as well as project staff whose support underpins the Agreement. The features can be found at <http://www.unep-aewa.org/news>

#### Coffee-Table Book

On the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA, the Secretariat is producing a coffee-table book illustrated with high quality pictures of 20 AEWA species. This production has been generously funded by The Netherlands, the depositary country of the Agreement and Germany, the host country of the Secretariat.

#### MOP6 20th Anniversary and Reception

It is planned to dedicate part of the first meeting day of MOP6 to the celebration of the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. The Secretariat, in close cooperation with the Government of Germany, also plans a reception for MOP6 delegates to take place on the first evening of the Meeting in order to celebrate 20 years of AEWA.

### 3. COMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

With the agreement from the Chairs of the CMS and AEWA Standing Committees, on 27 January 2014, the Executive Secretary of CMS established a *Common Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising Team* (IMCA) as a pilot initiative to demonstrate the benefits of shared services between CMS and AEWA.

With the agreement of the then Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA, the Information Officer of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was appointed Coordinator of the new IMCA Team which has consisted of the following five staff members and consultants:

*Information Officer and Coordinator of the Joint Communications Team*, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat  
*Information Assistant*, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, part-time  
*Associate Information Officer*, UNEP/CMS Secretariat (until 31 December 2014)  
*Senior Public Information Assistant*, UNEP/CMS Secretariat  
*Consultant Editor*, UNEP/CMS Secretariat.

An IT Consultant, UNEP/CMS Secretariat, was appointed for six months from April 2015 and the UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary decided to allocate a further part-time *Information Assistant* from the UNEP/CMS Secretariat to the IMCA as of 1 June 2015.

The new team is supervised directly by the CMS Executive Secretary. Its efforts in 2014 were mainly dedicated to the CMS Family Website Project, World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) in May 2014 and the IMCA-related preparation of the CMS COP11 held in November 2014.

In 2015, the focus is mainly on the development of the new communication strategy (documents AEWA/MOP6.21 and MOP6 DR 10), and the IMCA-related preparation of the AEWA MOP6 and 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of AEWA and World Migratory Bird Day 2015. World Migratory Bird Day was celebrated on 9-10 May 2015 under the central theme *Energy – make it bird-friendly!* It aimed to highlight and promote the guidelines developed by CMS and AEWA on both renewable energy and power lines.

For consideration at the CMS COP11 (Quito, Ecuador, 4-9 November 2014), an *Analysis of shared common services between CMS Family instruments* was prepared by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and released on 5 September 2014 (UNEP/CMS/Doc16.2) after comments from the Chairs of the CMS and AEWA Standing Committees.

CMS Resolution 11.3 (document AEWA/MOP Inf.6.3), adopted by the CMS Parties in Quito, requests an independent analysis to be submitted to the decision-making bodies of the wider CMS Family, reporting on the legal, financial, operational, and administrative implications of actions to enhance synergies. The CMS Secretariat, in the summer of 2015, contracted consultants to carry out this independent analysis. A number of AEWA Secretariat staff members were interviewed by the consultants on 2 July 2015 and invited to provide comments on a draft version of the analysis published in August 2015. The final independent analysis, including an annex featuring all comments received, was delivered on 8 September 2015. This document is provided for consideration as AEWA/MOP Inf.6.8. The CMS Standing Committee will examine this issue at its 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 14 October 2015 and the result of the discussion will be disseminated through the AEWA MOP6 web page. The 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA is invited to consider the process and take a decision on the way forward as regards synergies, such as through sharing common service areas and a Joint Executive Secretary (see also annex 1 of the Standing Committee report AEWA/MOP6.6).

#### **Overview of AEWA Publications and Websites (June 2012 – May 2015)**

The different units within the Secretariat produce the materials to be published or disseminated through different communication channels. The IMCA is responsible for the final stage of production of these documents.

#### **Publications:**



- AEWa Agreement Text (2012-2015) – English/French
- MOP5 Proceedings – English/French
- Accession Guidelines – Arabic/English/French/Portuguese/Russian

#### Other Information Materials

- Logo design for the AEWa International Working Group for the Slaty Egret,
- Species banners for the Slaty Egret, Pink-footed Goose, Grey Crowned Crane and Shoebill
- Logo stickers for the AEWa International Working Groups of the Slaty Egret, White-winged Flufftail, Pink-footed Goose, Madagascar Pond-heron, Lesser Flamingo, Black-tailed Godwit, Lesser White-fronted Goose, Northern Bald Ibis, Red-breasted Goose, Sociable Lapwing, Grey Crowned Crane and Shoebill

#### World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) Information Materials for the annual Campaigns between 2013-2015

- WMBD poster – English/French/Spanish/German
- WMBD postcard – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD poster sticker – English/French/Spanish
- WMBD logo sticker
- WMBD concert programme – English/German
- WMBD concert poster – English/German
- WMBD concert postcard in 2015 – German
- WMBD trailer

#### Websites:

- Launch of the new **AEWA Website** (May 2014) as part of the CMS Family Website Project
- Upgrade of the **AEWA Technical Committee Workspace** (Drupal 7 upgrade in the context of a CMS Family Project to build work spaces for the other technical/scientific advisory bodies of CMS, ASCOBANS and EUROBATS)
- Dedicated **Bird Trapping/Illegal bird killing Website** [www.illegalbirdkilling.aewa.info](http://www.illegalbirdkilling.aewa.info). The website was set up in-house by the AEWa Information Officer and all content for the website was developed by the Science Implementation and Compliance Unit, which also takes care of its ongoing maintenance.
- Dedicated **World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) Websites** for the annual campaigns 2013 to 2015
- **Single Species International Working Group Websites** made available for the coordinators of the different working groups. Based on the model of the dedicated website of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (<http://lesserwhitefrontedgoose.aewa.info/>), the UNEP/AEWa Secretariat made available the basic framework for dedicated websites for a number of AEWa International Single Species Working Groups, including, but not limited to, websites for the Red-breasted Goose, Pink-footed Goose and the Sociable Lapwing. Guidance on setting up the websites and on their use is provided by the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit.

#### Social Media

Facebook accounts for AEWa as well as World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) have been set up and are regularly maintained. Especially the WMBD Facebook Account is heavily used and helps to promote the campaign, particularly in the peak-months leading up to the WMBD weekend. Twitter, Youtube and Flickr accounts for WMBD have also been established and are being used to help support the annual campaign.

#### 4. SCIENCE, IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Following MOP5, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been working on the implementation and development of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans (ISSAPs and ISSMPs). Six ISSAPs have been presented for the consideration of the Standing Committee (documents AEWA/MOP6.25 to 30). In addition, the first AEWA Multi-Species Action Plan, for Coastal Seabirds of the Benguela Upwelling System is in development and will be available for submission to MOP6. Criteria for prioritizing AEWA Populations for Action and Management Planning and for the retirement of ISSAPs have been examined by TC12 (Document AEWA/MOP6.33).

The Secretariat will be involved as a co-funder and contributor to a project sponsored by the European Commission on action planning for European species (EuroSAP project). The project is being coordinated by BirdLife International and will run from 2015 to 2018. ISSAPs for three priority AEWA species will be developed (Dalmatian Pelican and Velvet Scoter) or revised (White-headed Duck), at flyway level, and in addition the project will produce an EU multi-species action plan for grassland-breeding waders.

Limited progress was made on the opened Implementation Review Process (IRP) cases in the Syrian Arab Republic, Montenegro and Bulgaria, either due to an increasingly difficult political situation or lack of response from the relevant authorities. A new IRP was opened, related to large-scale afforestation of lowland wader breeding habitat in Iceland. The issue has been raised in the AMBI programme and in the Bern Convention meeting, both in December 2014, so a joint AEWA, Bern Convention, Ramsar Convention and CAFF mission is tentatively planned for 2016 in order to support Iceland in dealing with this issue.

Work has also progressed on a number of the international reviews to be submitted to MOP6. However, due to a lack of funding one report has had to be postponed.

The 6<sup>th</sup> Edition of the *Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds in the Agreement Area* is presented for consideration by MOP6 (document AEWA/MOP6.14). The Secretariat was obliged to postpone the *Report on the Site Network for Waterbirds in the Agreement Area* which will not be submitted to MOP6. The production of a *Review of the Implementation of AEWA International Single Species Action and Management Plans* has been undertaken internally together with the network of AEWA International Species Group coordinators. A limited update of the *Review of the Status of Non-native Species of Waterbirds* will be produced on the basis of the National Reports submitted to MOP6, thanks to a voluntary contribution by Switzerland.

For the implementation of the power line Resolution 5.16 adopted at MOP5, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been facilitating discussions on the options to establish a multi-stakeholder task force on the energy sector under CMS. This would cover the African-Eurasian region and involve, for example, the CMS Raptors MOU as well as other MEAs, such as the Bern Convention. The establishment of the Energy Task Force was approved by the CMS COP11 in November 2014 and efforts are already underway to convene it.

A review and guidelines on the impact of renewable energy developments on migratory species have been commissioned as a joint CMS/AEWA project, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and BirdLife International. The report and subsequent guidelines cover all migratory species and all renewable energy sources. Both the report and guidelines were presented at CMS COP11 in 2014 and are also submitted to MOP6 for consideration (documents AEWA/MOP6.37 and AEWA/MOP6.38). The implementation of the resolutions under CMS and AEWA are to be dealt with by the Energy Task Force when convened. As already mentioned above, this year's WMBD campaign also picked up this issue.

In addition, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been involved in the re-launch of the *Wetlands International Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group* (WHSG), a meeting of which took place on 28 August 2013 at a special session on waterbird management at the 31<sup>st</sup> Congress of the International Union of Game Biologists (Brussels, Belgium, 27-29 August 2013). This included assisting with the development of the new WHSG Terms of Reference and the general concept for the group.

Re-activating the group is a response - in part - to an increase in activities related to the sustainable management of waterbirds within the AEWA region. The group will, in particular, aim to promote science-based knowledge and to act as scientific advisors in national and international processes where harvest is an issue for

conservation or management of waterbird species and species populations. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is a member of the WHSG Board and participated in both meetings of the Board so far.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat continues to contribute to the *Waterbird Monitoring Partnership* hosted by Wetlands International, which was established in response to the call by Resolution 3.6 (MOP3, 2005). The Secretariat, in particular, attends meetings of the Partnership's Strategic and Policy Group.

A new project on climate change adaptation, to be coordinated by Wetlands International, was approved by the major funder (International Climate Initiative of the German Government) and the Secretariat will be involved as a co-funder and contributor. The project is entitled "*Climate resilient site network in the African-Eurasian flyway*" and its concept evolved on the basis of the AEWA climate change agenda and mandates from the MOP and it will involve some site assessments, two pilot projects in Mali and Ethiopia, production of guidelines and training of practitioners in African Parties. The project will commence in 2015 and will run until the end of 2019.

The Secretariat is also a member of the *CMS Scientific Council Working Group on Bird Poisoning*. The Secretariat has, in particular, been leading on the issue of lead poisoning. In addition, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been involved in the Bern Convention process on the illegal killing of birds.

In this context, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat put forward the idea to establish an inter-governmental task force to eradicate illegal killing, trapping and unsustainable use of birds in the Pan-Mediterranean region. All these common issues between CMS and AEWA were examined during the CMS COP11 and resolutions adopted (documents AEWA/MOP Inf. 6.4 and MOP Inf. 6.5).

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, in close collaboration with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and the Raptors MoU Coordination Unit, was also involved in the organisation and running of a Southern African sub-regional workshop on preventing poisoning of migratory birds. This workshop was kindly hosted by the Government of the Republic of South Africa and took place in Cape Town on 24 August 2015, back to back with the African Preparatory meeting for the AEWA MOP6. It brought together AEWA, CMS and Raptors MoU National Focal Points, as well as Agricultural Ministry Representatives and other experts from ten Southern African countries (Angola, Botswana, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland and Zimbabwe), and will result in a sub-regional Action Plan on the implementation of recommendations from the CMS guidelines to prevent the risk of poisoning to migratory birds.

### **Coordination and Implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose**

The coordination of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group continues to be facilitated by the AEWA Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The Secretariat is a partner in the current EU LIFE+ project for the Lesser White-fronted Goose lead by BirdLife Greece. Key outcomes of the project include the adoption of a common monitoring scheme for the species as well as the decision to establish a network of critical sites.

A revision of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose was scheduled to be adopted at MOP6 in November 2015, which would have included an extensive update of the Action Plan framework. However, due to differences in the positions of various Range States which could not be bridged, the Standing Committee decided that the draft revised document would not be submitted to MOP6 for approval.

Additional projects facilitated by the Secretariat under the framework of the Working Group include monitoring missions as well as projects to lessen the impact of illegal killing in Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Russia and Iran. Funding for these projects has been provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency and the Finnish Ministry of the Environment.

### **The AEWA African Initiative**

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has promoted the implementation of the Agreement in the African region, particularly with regard to Resolution 5.9 on the implementation of the African Initiative and the AEWA Plan

of Action for Africa. Details can be found in the report on the implementation of the African Initiative, submitted to the meeting as document AEW/MOP 6.11.

## **Publications**

The following publications have been produced in the framework of the AEW Technical Series:

- Technical Series 33: Update Report on the Use of Non-toxic Shot for Hunting in Wetlands;
- Technical Series 43: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Slaty Egret;
- Technical Series 44: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Northwest European Population of the Bewick's Swan;
- Technical Series 45: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Greenland White-fronted Goose;
- Technical Series 47: International Single Species Action Plan for the Sociable Lapwing;
- Technical Series 48: International Species Management Plan for the Svalbard Population for the Pink-footed Goose;
- Technical Series 49 Guidelines for the Translocation of Waterbirds for Conservation Purposes: Complementing the IUCN Guidelines;
- Technical Series 50: Guidelines on How to Avoid or Mitigate Impact of Electricity Power Grids on Migratory Birds – English/French; and
- Technical Series 51: International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Shoebill.

The [Plan of Action to Address Bird Trapping](#) along the Mediterranean Coasts of Egypt and Libya was also produced.

## **5. CAPACITY BUILDING**

As follow-up on Complementary Target 5.1 of the AEW Plan of Action for Africa, the UNEP/AEW Secretariat organised an African preparatory meeting for the 6<sup>th</sup> Session of the AEW Meeting of Parties (Pre-MOP6). The AEW African Pre-MOP6 Meeting, kindly hosted by the Government of South Africa from 25-27 August 2015, brought together AEW National Focal Points or their representatives from 32 out of the 35 African Contracting Parties.

The meeting provided an important opportunity for National Focal Points to deliberate on key issues of relevance for the region, which will be addressed by the AEW MOP6. It also enabled them to negotiate common regional positions to be presented at the MOP. Further details on the AEW African Pre-MOP can be found in document AEW/MOP 6.11. The AEW African Pre-MOP6 meeting took place back to back with a joint CMS/AEW/Raptors MoU workshop for the Southern African sub-region regarding the implementation of CMS Resolution 11.5 on preventing poisoning of migratory birds. The organisation of both the Pre-MOP6 meeting and workshop was made possible thanks to funding secured in the framework of the joint AEW/CMS capacity-building project supported by the European Commission (further details on this project are provided in section 5 below) as well as co-funding from the Government of the Republic of South Africa.

In partnership with EuroNatur, a Germany-based NGO which will be providing financial and logistical support, a training workshop will be organised for the National administrative and Technical Focal Points of the AEW Parties from the Adriatic flyway (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and the FYR of Macedonia). The event is scheduled to take place on 5-9 October 2015 and its format will follow that of the African Pre-MOP6 meeting. In addition, if accepted by the Parties, EuroNatur will offer part-time staffing to support the National Focal Points in each of the above-mentioned countries in coordinating the implementation of the Agreement.

## 6. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

### **Project on “Effective Implementation of CMS, AEWA and other CMS-Family Instruments across Various Regions and Languages through Capacity Building”**

Addressing the need for improving the capacity of institutions responsible for implementing CMS and AEWA (as laid down in the CMS Strategic Plan 2012-2014, CMS COP10 Capacity-building Work Plan for 2012-2014 and the AEWA Action Plan and Strategic Plan 2009-2017), the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats developed and submitted a project proposal which was approved for a €500,000 grant under the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP) Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - DG Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The funds for the initial proposal were approved in December 2011.

The UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats further developed a proposal for some complementary activities to be implemented, entitled “Capacity-building Related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements in ACP<sup>1</sup> countries (ACP/MEAs 2)”. In August 2014, an additional €50,000 was approved to co-fund the implementation of the African preparatory meeting for the AEWA MOP6, under this second phase of the project.

The ENRTP capacity building project focuses on the African region and aims to improve institutional capacity for the implementation of CMS, AEWA and other CMS instruments. It has been implemented by the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats. Activities implemented under this project and which contributed to the implementation of AEWA during the current reporting period include:

- Improving knowledge on the flyway approach to waterbird and wetland conservation as well as capacity for training at the national and regional levels in Africa, through two Training of Trainers (ToT) courses using the WOW Flyway Training Kit and other existing training tools such as the ONCFS training module on waterbirds survey and monitoring in sub-Saharan Africa and BirdLife International’s IBA monitoring methodology. These ToTs targeted Anglophone countries in Southern and Eastern Africa and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa). Further details are provided in document AEWA/MOP 6.11.
- Improving the capacity for the participation of the African region at the AEWA MOP6 through the organization of the AEWA African Pre-MOP6 meetings. Further details on this are also provided in document AEWA/MOP 6.11.

## 7. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

### **Policy-related Developments**

Some policy-related developments which are of potential significant interest for the future of the Agreement, have been taking place within the AEWA region:

#### Working Group on Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region

The Working Group has been established under the CMS Scientific Council, with the purpose of steering the production and subsequent implementation of an Action Plan to “Improve the Conservation Status of Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region”. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is represented in the Working Group by its Technical Officer. The UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats have also closely collaborated on the organisation of the workshop *Improving the Conservation Status of Migratory Landbirds in the African-Eurasian Region* which was held in Accra, Ghana, from 31 August - 2 September 2012, back to back with the 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee. The Landbirds Action Plan developed by the Working Group was adopted by the CMS COP11.

#### Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been closely following the development within the framework of CMS of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023. This included participation as an observer in the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Strategic Plan Working Group (Bonn, 5-6 November 2012), and providing comments to

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<sup>1</sup> Africa, Caribbean and Pacific

reviews and draft versions of the Strategic Plan (cf. StC Inf 10.5 for the Strategic Plan approved by CMS COP11).

#### *Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)*

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been following the process of the establishment and operationalisation of IPBES. The Secretariat obtained observer status to the IPBES Plenary, and attended the first meeting of the Plenary (IPBES-1), held in Bonn, Germany, 21-26 January 2013.

Pursuant to IPBES-1, the IPBES Interim Secretariat called for the submission of requests to IPBES on scientific and technical matters that require the Platform's attention. In response to this call for submissions, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat collaborated with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and the secretariats of other CMS Agreements in the drafting of proposals for scientific assessments to be considered by the Platform for inclusion in its programme of work (particularly an assessment of the economics of ecosystem services provided by migratory species) but these proposals were not accepted.

The Secretariat attended the third meeting of the Plenary (IPBES-3) held in Bonn from 12-17 January 2015 and delivered a joint statement on behalf of CMS Family (see <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/node/2759>). There is a great potential for the MEAs to use the regional and thematic assessments. The UNEP/CMS Secretariat represents AEWA in other bodies of the Platform.

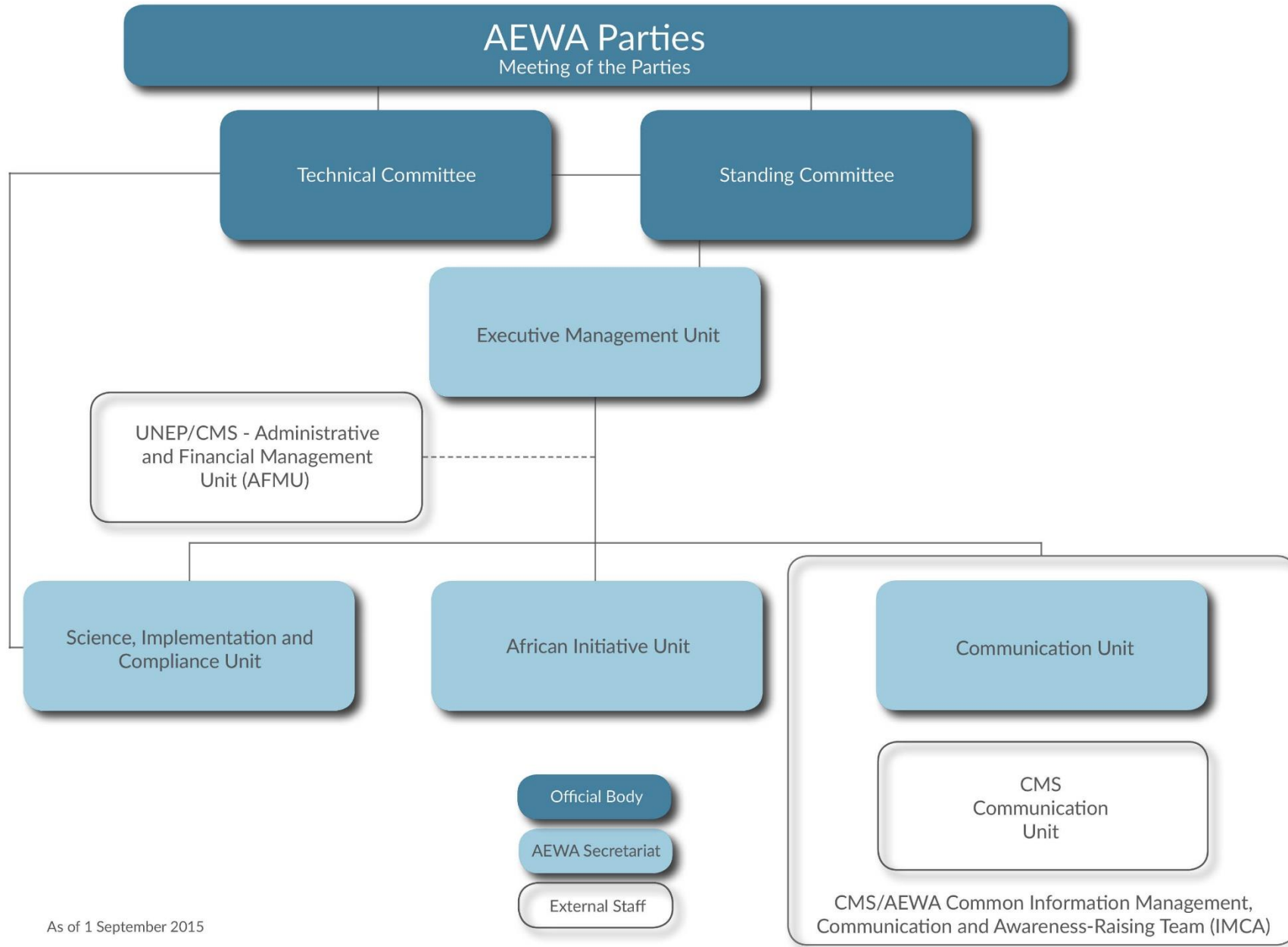
#### *Synergies among Biodiversity-related Conventions*

The UNEP project “*Improving the effectiveness of and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and exploring opportunities for further synergies*” aims to address the mandate given in 2012 from the UNEP Governing Council to undertake “*activities to improve the effectiveness of and cooperation among multilateral environmental agreements, taking into account the autonomous decision-making authority of the conferences of the parties*” and “*explore the opportunities for further synergies in the administrative functions of the multilateral environmental agreement secretariats administered by the United Nations Environment Programme and to provide advice on such opportunities to the governing bodies of those multilateral environmental agreements*”.

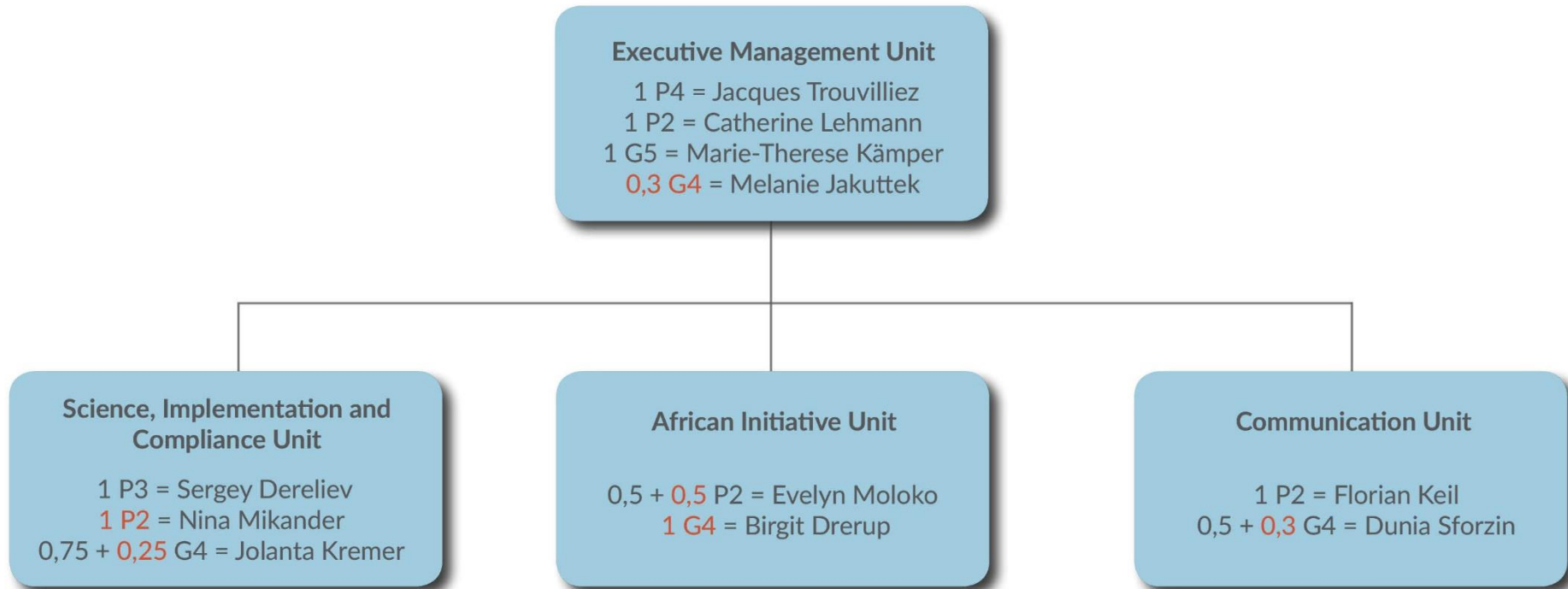
This project may also help States address the decisions on related issues by the Conferences and Meetings of the Parties to the biodiversity-related MEAs. It will explore options for further synergies at all levels of the major biodiversity-related MEAs, with a view to identifying options for making additional improvements in efficient and effective implementation of the MEAs through enhanced collaboration and cooperation. The ultimate output of this project will be a set of recommendations for the UNEP Executive Director to present to the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA) in 2016, responding directly to the UNEP Governing Council decision above.

A first meeting took place in Interlaken, Switzerland from 26-28 August 2014 and the AEWA Executive Secretary participated on behalf of the CMS Executive Secretary. Based on the outcomes of this expert meeting, a paper outlining draft options for enhanced collaboration and coordination at the global level across the biodiversity-related MEAs provided the basis for discussion at a second expert meeting which was held in Switzerland from 13-15 May 2015. The AEWA Executive Secretary stressed the importance of synergies at the national level, using the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity to promote these synergies. AEWA and CMS also gave examples of their collaboration and joint programme of work with other MEAs.

ANNEX I – UNEP/AEWA Secretariat: Organisational Structure



UNEP/AEWA Secretariat: Staff Composition



P = Professional Staff Category  
 G = General Staff Category

Figures in black = Full-time or part-time posts funded through core budget  
 Figures in red = Posts or extensions dependent on voluntary contributions or savings

As of 1 September 2015