



AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

5th SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES
14 – 18 May 2012, La Rochelle, France



“Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands”

RESOLUTION 5.3

AEWA INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASKS FOR 2012-2015

Recalling Resolution 4.10 on International Implementation Tasks (IITs) for the Agreement for the period 2009-2016,

Acknowledging the significant contribution of the Wings over Wetlands (WOW) Project to the waterbird conservation within the Agreement area and the matching funding raised for the implementation of WOW through IIT 2009-2016 projects,

Appreciating the support provided by Contracting Parties, inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations for the implementation of the International Implementation Tasks 2009-2016,

Expressing concern about the low level of implementation of International Implementation Tasks in the last triennium and quadrennium since 2006,

Noting the conclusions of the *Report on the Conservation Status of Migratory Waterbirds within the Agreement Area – 5th Edition* (document AEW/MOP 5.14), the preliminary draft of the first edition of the *Report on the Site Network for Waterbirds in the Agreement Area* (document AEW/MOP 5.15), as well as some other reviews submitted to MOP5, such as the *Review on the Conflict between Migratory Birds and Electricity Power Grids in the African-Eurasian Region* (document AEW/MOP 5.38), the *Report on Adverse Effects of Agrochemicals on Migratory Waterbirds in Africa* (document AEW/MOP Inf. 5.5) and the *Summary, Synthesis and Report of Project Coordination: Rehabilitation of Important Migratory Waterbird Sites Which Have Been Degraded by Invasive Aquatic Weeds* (document AEW/MOP Inf. 5.4),

Noting also the contribution these International Implementation Tasks will make to the objectives of AEW's Strategic Plan,

Taking into account the AEW Plan of Action for Africa developed over the past quadrennium and adopted by Resolution 5.9,

Recalling the need for proactive and targeted conservation measures in order to achieve the CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2020,

Reaffirming the particular importance of:

- (a) the contribution that conservation of migratory waterbirds and the wise use of their wetland habitats can make to sustainable development, especially in developing countries and countries with economies in transition;
- (b) the need to identify functional networks of key sites through an understanding of the migratory flyways of populations covered by the Agreement; and

- (c) the need to support the maintenance of the International Waterbird Census in Europe and its further development in Africa, the Middle East, East and Central Asia as the basis of assessing the international status and trends of waterbird populations and thus the effective implementation of the Agreement.

The Meeting of the Parties:

1. *Adopts* the International Implementation Tasks for 2012-2015 appended to this Resolution, which are updated and amended on the basis of the International Implementation Tasks adopted for 2009-2016 as the medium-term priorities for international cooperation activities for implementation of the Agreement;
2. *Urges* Contracting Parties and specialised international organisations to support ongoing projects and, where appropriate, to develop new international cooperation projects for the implementation of the Agreement, according to the priorities outlined in the Strategic Plan and the Plan of Action for Africa, to keep the Agreement Secretariat fully informed of progress, and to report conclusions at future Sessions of the Meeting of the Parties;
3. *Further urges* Contracting Parties, *instructs* the Agreement Secretariat and *invites* specialised international organisations to seek innovative mechanisms and partnerships to enable implementation of the priorities listed in the Appendix, including joint ventures, twinning arrangements, secondments and exchange programmes, corporate sector sponsorships and species adoption programmes;
4. *Requests* bilateral and multilateral donors to provide financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the implementation of the Agreement, by supporting implementation of the priorities listed in the Appendix;
5. *Instructs* the Agreement Secretariat to disseminate the International Implementation Tasks for 2012-2015, to coordinate closely with related conventions and international organisations for their implementation, and to seek appropriate donors.

AEWA INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASKS (IIT) FOR 2012-2015

Introduction

1. The following list of priority activities has been established to assist Contracting Parties, donors and other stakeholders to further the international implementation of the Action Plan of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds during the period 2012-2015.
2. Since the first Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Agreement, which took place in November 1999 in Cape Town (South Africa), when the International Implementation Priorities (IIP) for 2000-2004 were adopted in Resolution 1.4, priorities have been revised and updated by each MOP. The current proposal for IIT 2012-2015 represents a revised list of activities based on the MOP4-approved IITs 2009-2016.

Implementation Priorities 2009-2016 as the basis

3. In a separate document (AEWA/MOP 5.17) the implementation status of the tasks over the period 2009-2011 is presented, focussing on actions undertaken or in progress within the AEWA framework (more may have been undertaken by individual countries or other agencies in other contexts). Document AEWA/MOP 5.17 shows that there has been some progress in implementing some projects, particularly projects related to the Wings Over Wetlands Project (WOW) / African-Eurasian Flyways GEF project (which concluded in 2010) and Single Species Action Plan preparation and coordination, however, funding has been lacking for a number of projects.

Revision

4. In order to identify necessary changes and additions that were needed to the existing implementation tasks, the IIT list was thoroughly reviewed and amended by the Technical Committee. The entire list underwent a comprehensive revision. The WOW-related projects which were implemented were deleted and the non-implemented ones which were still considered to be a priority were revised. Several previous projects were considered low priority and therefore removed from the updated list, while a number of new project concepts were added. The remaining non-implemented projects were also all revised and updated.

Order and format of presentation

5. As in the previous versions, the presentation of the tasks in the present document follows the headings of the Action Plan to the Agreement. The number(s) in parentheses after each task title refer(s) to the relevant paragraph of the Agreement's Action Plan.
6. The order of presentation does not reflect any order of priority.
7. For each task, an indicative budget and timescale is presented for guidance, along with the types of activity involved. It should be noted that the budgets are only indicative. Detailed project proposals and budgets to meet each task will be required at a later stage and should be the basis for the final fund-raising.

Discussion

8. The tasks include only those requiring international cooperation, and are not intended to reflect national implementation priorities, which must be determined by each Contracting Party and could include more on-the-ground conservation activities. A number of the proposals underlined the importance of such activities. Five types of international cooperation will be appropriate in addressing these priorities:
 - (a) Exchange/transfer of information;
 - (b) Research, surveys and monitoring;
 - (c) Exchange/transfer of expertise;
 - (d) Financial assistance; and
 - (e) Transboundary drafting and implementation of action plans.

Collaboration

9. A number of Implementation Tasks, especially where these relate to reviews of data and information and for the production of guidance, could and should be undertaken collaboratively with other relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). In particular, these could include the Ramsar Convention (and its Scientific and Technical Review Panel) and the Convention on Migratory Species (and its Scientific Council). The benefits of such joint working include potential cost-sharing, wider inputs to technical work and greater outreach to a wider range of interested parties and stakeholders. In planning the implementation of each IIT, active collaboration with other relevant MEAs will be sought as appropriate and possible.

A. Species Conservation

1. Implement existing international single species action plans (AP 2.2.1, 7.4)

Prior to the entry into force of the Agreement, a number of international single species action plans relevant to Paragraph 2.2.1 of the Agreement's Action Plan had already been developed (by BirdLife International, Wetlands International and the International Crane Foundation). These include action plans for: *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, *Pelecanus crispus*, *Botaurus stellaris*, *Marmaronetta angustirostris*, *Polysticta stellerii*, *Grus leucogeranus*, *Fulica cristata*, *Numenius tenuirostris*, *Larus audouinii*, and *Sterna dougallii*. (NB: Several of these action plans cover the European part of the range of the species only, and a priority is to extend them to cover their full range within the Agreement area (see next item)). A number of international single species action plans were also adopted by the last four MOPs, namely for *Vanellus gregarius*, *Glareola nordmanni*, *Gallinago media*, *Oxyura leucocephala*, *Crex crex*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Geronticus eremita*, *Branta bernicla hrota* (East Canadian High Arctic population), *Phoeniconaias minor*, *Ardeola idae*, *Platalea leucorodia*, *Anser erythropus*, *Oxyura maccoa*, *Limosa limosa*, *Sarothrura ayresi*, *Egretta vinaceigula*, *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* (W Siberia & NE Europe/NW Europe population), *Anser albifrons flavirostris* and *Branta ruficollis*, as well as a Species Management Plan for *Anser brachyrhynchus* (Svalbard population) and a number of action plans are under preparation. Whilst many of the actions identified for these species will have to be undertaken and financed at national or local level, a budget is required for international coordination and promotion, and to provide small grants for national and local initiatives.

Indicative budget: € 60,000 min./species/year (for coordination/grants)
Duration: Annual, ongoing
Activities: Coordination, small grants, evaluation, reporting

2. Develop new International Single Species Action Plans (AP 2.2.1, 7.4)

New International Single Species Action Plans need to be developed as a priority for the populations listed in category 1, column A, Table 1 to the Agreement Action Plan, and for those species listed with an asterisk in column A of Table 1. Production and format of the action plans should follow the recommendations given in the MOP-approved guidelines. As soon as the new action plans are completed for each species, implementation should begin. In view of the large number of action plans to be prepared, it is strongly recommended that the most urgent attention be given to globally threatened species. Furthermore, it is recommended that individual Range States agree to take the lead on development of individual action plans (as an in-kind contribution to the Agreement), in close cooperation with the other Range States of each species (coordination of plan development including workshops, drafting, consultation and publication of each plan). Plans should be submitted to the Technical Committee in draft form for consultation, to ensure harmonisation and quality control.

Indicative budget: € 50,000 max. /per species for action plan preparation
Duration: 12 months per plan
Activities: Coordination, workshop, planning, publication

B. Habitat Conservation

3. Maintain overview of the sites of international importance for AEWA species (AP 3.1.2, 7.4)

A vital piece of information for the conservation of any migratory species is an understanding of the network of key sites required to sustain their populations throughout the year. The Critical Site Network Tool web-portal, developed under the framework of the Wings Over Wetlands – African-Eurasian Flyway Project, has brought together the already existing information concerning key sites for migratory waterbirds that meet recognised criteria of being internationally important building primarily on the data collected through the International Waterbird Census of Wetlands International and through the Important Bird Areas programme of BirdLife International. The web-portal already provides access to information on site networks by species and populations and highlights the internationally important populations of any internationally important sites. The members of the WOW Partnership (i.e. the AEWA and Ramsar Secretariat, BirdLife International, Wetlands International and the UNEP-WCMC) have committed themselves to continue updating the parent datasets and making the information accessible through the CSN Tool. However, maintenance of the interoperability between individual datasets and reassessing the international importance of sites require some annually recurring work.

Indicative budget: € 50,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Maintenance of database interoperability, web site maintenance

4. Identification of important sites vulnerable to climate change (AP 3.2, 7.4)

Climate change vulnerability is an important element of the assessment of the sufficiency of the international network of sites for the protection of migratory waterbirds. While the first edition of the AEWA International Site Review, as required by the AEWA Action Plan paragraph 7.4, submitted to MOP5 have assessed the protection and management status of the internationally important sites identified by the Critical Site Network Tool, the climate change vulnerability of the network has not been estimated. Undertaking such an assessment through an integrated flyway-scale approach will be complex and expensive, will take longer and require the involvement of research institutions. A simpler and less expensive approach, based on the available CSN data and other existing information, can overlay spatial data to identify the vulnerability of individual sites. Despite its limitations, such an exercise will be a useful guidance on the priority sites for climate adaptation action.

Such a project can be undertaken in two modules based on the estimated funding required for each of them:

Module 1 – assessing the risk to important sites for species/populations considered to be sensitive to climate change, sites on the poleward edge of any landmass and sites vulnerable to sea-level rise.

Indicative budget: € 6,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Desk study

Module 2 – assessing the risk to important sites located at high altitude, sites vulnerable to changes in water-level as a result of changes in rainfall and evaporation and sites vulnerable to changes in human land-use induced by climate change.

Indicative budget: € 70,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Desk study

5. Habitat Priorities for waterbirds in Africa (AP 3.2, 3.3)

The BirdLife International project Habitats for Birds in Europe has made an important contribution to defining habitat conservation priorities for birds in Europe. This now needs to be further elaborated also in other parts of the flyway such as Africa and thus assisting the further development of the Plan of Action for Africa. The project should result in a series of habitat action plans containing prioritised recommendations and costed projects for each key habitat type. Severely threatened habitats, and habitats of importance to globally threatened species, should be given priority.

Indicative budget: € 250,000
Duration: 3 years
Activities: Desk study, review, workshops, publication, project proposals

6. Habitat Priorities for waterbirds in West and Central Asia (AP 3.2, 3.3)

The BirdLife International project Habitats for Birds in Europe has made an important contribution to defining habitat conservation priorities for birds in Europe. This now needs to be further elaborated also in other parts of the flyway such as West and Central Asia. The project should result in a series of habitat action plans containing prioritised recommendations and costed projects for each key habitat type. Severely threatened habitats, and habitats of importance to globally threatened species, should be given priority.

Indicative budget: € 150,000
Duration: 3 years
Activities: Desk study, review, workshops, publication, project proposals

C. Management of Human Activities

7. Increase the knowledge on waterbird harvests in the Agreement area (AP 4.1, 5.7)

Waterbirds are harvested widely throughout the Agreement area for recreation, trade and livelihoods. Little is known of the scale of such harvesting, nor of the impacts that such harvesting has on waterbird populations. The development of a programme aiming at accurately evaluating the harvest of waterbirds at the scale of the AEWA range is a huge task that would require a consequent amount of financial resources and would not necessarily bring results directly useful for management, as estimates of population size are also uncertain. It is therefore proposed to build up a programme aiming at progressively developing our knowledge on the use of waterbirds and focussing mainly on trends rather than absolute values. A “sustainable use officer” position should be created within the UNEP/AEWA secretariat. This officer should be in charge of:

- gathering existing information on hunting data within the AEWA range;
- liaising with organisations producing this type of information;
- analysing this information and evaluating the possibility of detecting trends in the catch;
- organising a technical forum or working group of partners interested in this topic; and
- suggesting a methodology aiming at evaluating the trends in numbers harvested and the catching effort and, if possible, implementing it.

Indicative budget: € 230,000 (can be split into 4-5 sub-projects on a regional basis)
Duration: 3 years
Activities: Reviews, research, survey, publications

8. Community based natural resource management (CBNRM) of waterbirds and wetlands

In recognition of the strong linkages between livelihoods and conservation, particularly in the African Region, there is a need to develop and implement five pilot projects that both improve local livelihoods and provide incentives for conservation at key sites. This should be done in line with contemporary understanding and best practice CBNRM. The projects should focus on waterbirds and the wetlands upon which they depend. The experiences should be collated and used to provide strategic advice on further promoting appropriate CBNRM of waterbirds and wetlands to improve livelihoods and conservation.

Indicative budget: € 1,250,000 (to be split into 5 sub-projects on a regional basis)
Duration: 5 years
Activities: Pilot Projects, Reviews, Publications

9. Evaluation of socio-economic values of waterbirds (AP 4.2.2)

In line with the developments brought about through the process of the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) process there is a need to evaluate the consumptive and non-consumptive use of waterbirds. These values have the potential to contribute substantially to sustainable rural development throughout the Agreement area. Yet very little is known of these values in different regions and their potential contribution to species and habitat conservation. Given the enormous scope of this work and the need for generating resource efficiency, it is proposed that this work is conducted through offering placements to students studying for masters or PhD degrees, supported by an active TC expert on rural development and economics. The results of the theses should be presented as case studies at appropriate workshops (e.g. IUGB, EAERE etc.) and published to advise future sustainable rural development initiatives. The work should be conducted in line with methodologies developed by the TEEB process and thus feed into policy decisions.

Indicative budget: € 20,000 p/a
Duration: Ongoing
Activities: Research, socio-economic surveys, workshop, publication

10. Evaluation of waterbirds as agricultural pests in Africa (AP 4.3.2, 4.3.3)

A number of migratory waterbird species covered by the Agreement are known to consume and potentially damage agricultural crops or commercial fish stocks (including those at fish-farms). Although the subject is relatively well studied in Europe, where geese, cormorants and herons are implicated, the situation in Africa is less well known. Here, populations of ducks and waders are reported as pests of rice and other crops. This project will work with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to review the extent, the species involved, and the location of this problem. The project will involve a review of existing knowledge, and a workshop of experts, culminating in a review publication and recommendations on crop protection measures. The need to develop specific action plans for any of the species concerned will also be considered.

Indicative budget: € 125,000
Duration: 2 years
Activities: Review, workshop, publication

11. Developing guidance to avoid or mitigate the impacts of extractive industries on habitats of importance for waterbirds (AP 4.3.1)

A major increase in market prices of metals and other geological commodities has led to a recent upsurge of activity by extractive industries. This has had, or has the potential to have, major impacts on habitats, particularly wetlands, of international importance for waterbirds.

A three-phase project is being undertaken which will lead to technical guidance for Contracting Parties and others on addressing these issues.

The first phase (undertaken jointly with Ramsar's STRP from 2009-2011) has been the development of a methodology to identify sites/areas, especially wetlands, likely to be vulnerable to the impacts of the extraction of minerals and other geological products. This methodology allows the identification of mineral resource hotspots, in the context of catchments important for migratory waterbirds. A second phase has been to review existing technical guidance for the exploration, production, closure and post-closure management of mines, as an aid to managing impacts on waterbird habitats.

A currently unfunded final phase would be to review emerging mining technologies and extraction techniques likely to be in use in the near future and the possible implications of these for habitats, especially wetlands, and their associated waterbirds.

Indicative budget: € 40,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Report on future implications jointly with Ramsar

12. Developing guidance to avoid or mitigate the impacts of wind energy developments on waterbirds and their habitats (AP 4.3.1)

Tackling climate change requires the employment of non-polluting renewable energy sources, such as wind. The wind energy sector has been receiving strong support and a number of countries within the AEW region are champions in the use of wind energy. It is projected that wind energy development will accelerate and expand geographically in future.

Besides its clear advantages for the environment, however, wind energy may pose a threat to biodiversity in terrestrial and marine ecosystems. With regard to waterbirds, the potential hazards may be summarised as follows:

- disturbance leading to displacement or exclusion, including barriers to movement;
- collision mortality;
- loss of, or damage to, habitat resulting from wind turbines and associated infrastructure.

Despite a number of resolutions and recommendations approved by the governing bodies of other MEAs, wind farms are still being built or planned in biodiversity-sensitive areas, especially migration corridors for birds. A wide range of statutory or industry guidance already exists to avoid or mitigate the impacts. The project would work with the Technical Committee, in liaison with relevant industry bodies and other interested parties, to identify key knowledge gaps and/or deficiencies in guidance related to the impact of renewable energy production and migratory waterbirds, and make proposals as to how these might most effectively be filled. This desk study will serve as a basis for conservation guidelines on avoidance or mitigation of wind farm development.

Indicative budget: € 75,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Desk study, conservation guidelines

13. Evaluation of threats to waterbirds and their habitats emerging from the development of renewable energy sources (AP 4.3.1)

Besides wind, a number of other renewable energy sources are being promoted as alleviation to the climate change, amongst them biofuels, solar and hydro-power. While having a positive role, aspects of some, notably biofuels production, have been subject to criticism (e.g. Ramsar Resolution X.25 Wetlands and “biofuels” http://www.ramsar.org/pdf/res/key_res_x_25_e.pdf). The Ramsar Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel has recently undertaken a review of current impacts of the energy sector on wetlands, together with horizon-scanning in relation to possible future developments.

The hazards to waterbirds and their habitats posed by the development of renewable energy sources are not yet clearly and thoroughly understood although the Ramsar review provides a starting point for such an assessment. Therefore under this project a review (jointly undertaken with Ramsar) will summarise knowledge on the potential impacts of the development of renewable sources of energy (other than wind farms) on waterbirds and their wetland habitats within the Agreement area. It will take a strategic approach in identifying those energy sectors that are likely to have most significant impacts on waterbird status, and make recommendations as to the types of intervention that AEWA might make to minimise these potential impacts. Such interventions, for example, include partnerships with particular energy sectors or development of guidance targeted at certain regions or disseminated in specific languages appropriate to those regions.

Indicative budget: € 50,000
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Desk study

D. RESEARCH AND MONITORING

INTEGRATED WATERBIRD MONITORING

14. International Waterbird Census – regional coordination and support surveys in developing countries (AP 5.2, 5.3, 7.4)

The International Waterbird Census, organised by Wetlands International, and conducted in most countries within the Agreement area, is one of the key tools for monitoring the conservation status of the populations covered by AEWA. It is based on annual non-breeding season surveys at a sample of sites, by an extensive network of, mainly, volunteer counters. Unfortunately, the financial and technical capacity to coordinate and to implement the national surveys is very unevenly distributed across the Agreement area. Experience shows that most developing countries in the Agreement area are not able to regularly cover the key sites without some basic support to cover travel costs, which presents a major limitation to the understanding of the conservation status of the AEWA populations.

Indicative budget: € 66,000 p.a. regional coordination + € 80,000 p.a. for January counts
Duration: Annual
Activities: Coordination, field surveys, publication of national totals annually

15. Special non-breeding waterbird counts (AP 5.2, 5.3, 7.4)

Although the International Waterbird Census can cover a significant proportion of the waterbird populations, the adequate monitoring of certain species would require special counts to cover their specific habitats which are usually not well covered during the regular IWC counts. These groups include geese and swans, seaducks, non-wetland waders and the poorly covered large tidal wetlands in Africa and South-west Asia.

Indicative budget: Goose and swan counts: € 50,000 p.a.
Seaduck counts: € 14,000 p.a. + € 85,000 p. 3 years to cover the Black Sea and Caspian Sea
Tidal wetlands in Africa and South-west Asia: € 93,000 p. 3 years
Non-wetland waders: € 10,000 p. 3 years
Duration: 3 years with annual activities
Activities: Coordination, field surveys, publication of results

16. Monitoring of colonial waterbirds (AP 3.1.2, 3.2, 4.2, 5)

A large proportion of the migratory water- and seabird species covered by the Agreement nest in colonies (particularly of the families: *Spheniscidae*, *Phaethontidae*, *Pelecanidae*, *Sulidae*, *Phalacrocoracidae*, *Fregatidae*, *Ardeidae*, *Ciconiidae*, *Threskiornithidae*, *Phoenicopteridae*, *Laridae*, *Sternidae*, *Alcidae*). Colonial waterbirds can be best monitored during the breeding season because a very significant proportion of the population of a species may be concentrating on a few localities at one time. In the meantime, many of these species are not adequately covered by the existing International Waterbird Census, which is based on non-breeding season surveys partly because they are widely distributed in areas that are difficult to access such as open sea. Good information about the colonies is also fundamental to identify and address factors that may threaten their populations. Although some national programmes already exist and even some international coordination takes place in certain subregions of the Agreement area, the Conservation Status Report has highlighted the need for more adequate international coordination of the monitoring of colonial water- and seabirds. Therefore, a desk study shall produce an overview of on-going initiatives, explore options, priorities and costing for coordinated international monitoring of colonial waterbirds during the breeding season.

Indicative budget: € 25,000 (monitoring study)
Duration: 2 years
Activities: Review, analysis, consultation, recommendations

17. Pilot demographic monitoring of waterbird populations (AP 3.1.2, 3.2, 4.2, 5)

Demographic monitoring (changes in vital rates) may provide an early warning of long-term changes and inform conservation and/or management actions more timely than simple counts. It is particularly important in the management framework of long-lived quarry species with a low reproduction rate such as geese. Vital rates can be estimated from observed age and sex ratios, re-sightings of individually marked birds and by other methods. The pilot project focusing on geese aims to demonstrate such a system by establishing collaboration amongst the key stakeholders that coordinate the collection of data relevant for monitoring changes in vital rates, establish sampling protocols, develop data collection and reporting system, integrated with other schemes such as the International Waterbird Census as much as possible, and develop costed plans for the future expansion of demographic monitoring to other AEWA populations.

Indicative budget: € 50,000
Duration: per year
Activities: Review, analysis, consultation, publication

RESEARCH

18. Survey work in poorly-known areas (AP 5.1)

Many gaps remain in knowledge of the importance and utilisation of even some very large wetlands by migratory waterbirds, particularly in Africa and South-West Asia. Regional workshops organised under the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) / African-Eurasian Flyways GEF project have identified knowledge gaps and prioritised gap-filling actions. It is recommended that grants (and expertise, if necessary) be made available for locally organised surveys or expeditions, to assess the importance of lesser-known areas. Such surveys, if conducted by visiting teams of experts, should involve a high component of training (and equipping) of local experts, and should result in a summary publication. These activities will be closely linked to those required for the next priority (19).

Indicative budget: € 50,000 p.a. (€ 2-10,000 per survey depending on location, size, accessibility)
Duration: Ongoing
Activities: Field survey, training, publication.

19. Publication of flyway atlases for different groups of species (AP 5.4, 7.4)

A first flyway atlas has been produced for *Anatidae* (1996) and the Wader Atlas in 2009. These initiatives have been received with great enthusiasm because they provide the basis for the flyway approach to the conservation of these species. However, other waterbird families still lack their atlases. The new generation of flyway atlases should use the results of ringing and other marking-resighting schemes more explicitly.

Indicative budget: € 400,000 for each of the following groups: (1) *Gaviidae*, *Podicipedidae*, *Pelecanidae*, *Phalacrocoracidae*, *Ardeidae*, *Ciconiidae*, *Balaenicipitidae*, *Threskiornithidae*, *Phoenicopteridae*, *Gruidae*, *Rallidae* – 75 species; (2) *Stercorariidae*, *Laridae*, *Sternidae*, *Rynchopidae* – 54 species; (3) *Anatidae* – 51 species; (4) *Spheniscidae*, *Phaethontidae*, *Sulidae*, *Fregatidae*, *Alcidae* – 15 species.
Duration: 3 years each
Activities: Coordination, review, data analysis, drafting and editing text, production of graphs, publication

20. Developing of coordinated marking schemes in Africa (AP 5.4)

Ringling and other marking studies have contributed greatly to our current understanding of waterbird migration and ecology. Whereas in Europe, the European Union for Bird Ringing has provided international coordination between the various national ringling schemes, no equivalent coordination mechanism exists for Africa or South-west Asia. It is proposed to continue the support for the development of a Pan-African ringling scheme (AFRING) to coordinate efforts to study the movements of intra-African migratory waterbirds. The project has a five-year timetable of which three annual phases have already been financed and implemented.

Indicative budget: € 70,000 per annum

Duration: 2 years

Activities: Coordination, ringling programmes, review, publication

E. EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

21. Improving survey and monitoring capacity for migratory waterbirds (AP 6.2)

There is an urgent need for enhancing survey and monitoring capacity for migratory waterbirds and the sites they use through training and by providing equipment. During the WOW Project, the geographic coverage and the quality of the network for data gathering on waterbirds and the sites they use was assessed for each sub-region within the AEWA region and identified the capacity-building needs of each country. Depending on the need of the specific sub-region, training workshops and training surveys will be performed to enhance the capacity of local observers either by more experienced local observers or by external trainers. In addition, in areas where the economic conditions prevent observers buying their own essential optical equipment, technical resources to support the network of volunteers will be provided. Twinning is a potential implementation mechanism whereby countries with higher capacity adopt countries with less well-developed schemes.

Indicative budget: € 40,000 p.a. for small grants to support national capacity building schemes
Duration: 5 years in total, 2-3 years per country, depending on the needs
Activities: Fieldwork, training, supply of equipment (first year)

22. Regional training programmes in Africa for implementation of the Agreement (AP 6.1, 6.2)

In numerous forums training has been identified as one of the key elements for advancing the implementation of the Agreement, particularly in Africa. Access to modern planning, assessment and management techniques relevant to local situations will greatly help under-resourced agencies use their resources most effectively. The regional training programmes in West Africa, organised by Wetlands International and the Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage (France) provide a useful model from which new programmes can be developed. It makes use of the recently updated ONCFS training module for waterbird identification and counts in Africa (currently available in English, French and Arabic) and is destined for training of trainers and used to complement the WOW Flyway Training Kit. It is strongly recommended that this type of training programme be extended throughout Africa while also noting the availability of other relevant training resources. Cost-effectiveness will be greatest if courses are based on groups of neighbouring countries, and if local expertise can be used for the majority of the training. Courses should target specific groups of professionals and include the following subjects, as appropriate: a general introduction to the work of the Agreement; waterbird identification, assessment and monitoring; waterbird ecology; habitat management for waterbirds; managing human activities; and public awareness.

Indicative budget: € 175,000 per year, per regional programme
Duration: 5 years
Activities: Coordination, training courses, materials, follow-up

23. Training programme for National Implementation Agencies for AEWA in the Contracting Parties (AP 6.1, 6.2)

From the international reviews compiled during the previous triennium (2006-2008) e.g. on hunting and trade legislation, it became evident that implementation of the Agreement by Contracting Parties is still insufficient. It has been suggested that more assistance is necessary for Parties to guide them in the implementation of AEWA and more precisely in the requirements arising from the accession to the Agreement. Therefore in addition to the regional training to be provided to target groups of professionals in Africa, as described in the previous project above, specific training for the National Implementation Agencies for AEWA in the Contracting Parties across the Agreement area is to be organised. This training will provide insight, amongst others, into the interpretation of provisions laid down in the Agreement and/or the Action Plan, the planning and implementation of the Agreement at national level, coordination of implementation, national reporting, roles and participation in the official meetings of the Agreement. This training could be linked to the regional training in Africa and further expanded to Eurasia. An additional specific training module has to be developed to pair with the ones developed under the WOW project.

Indicative budget: € 150,000 for the development of the training module (bi-lingual)
 € 100,000 for training per workshop (2 workshops in Africa and two in Eurasia)
 Duration: 5 years
 Activities: Training module development, coordination, training courses, materials, follow-up

24. Training course on the flyway approach to the conservation and wide use of waterbirds and wetlands (AP 6.1)

It is proposed to organise 10 day training courses for 10-15 representatives of institutions and organisations of certain subregions (e.g. CIS countries) using the Flyway Training Kit developed under the Wings Over Wetlands Project. The course consists of two technical modules focusing on understanding the ecological basis of the flyway concept and how to apply it in practice. In addition, the course includes a third module on communicating the flyway concept which aims to prepare the trainees for training others and to effectively advocate the flyway approach. The course will work with subregional groups, because training needs and social and cultural background are most likely to be similar within these groups. The courses are expected to contribute not only to an increased understanding of the flyway approach, but also to the establishment of closer cooperation among the different experts of different countries and institutions, and the strengthening of subregional cooperation.

Indicative budget: € 35,000 per group (average)
 Duration: 1 year
 Activities: Training

25. Regional workshops for the promotion of the Agreement (AP 6.3)

In order to promote the Agreement and encourage membership throughout the Agreement area, a number of promotional workshops should be arranged for specific subregions. The priority regions identified so far would be, in order: (i) the Central Asian Republics; (ii) the Arab states; (iii) Central and Southern Africa. These workshops should aim to gather appropriate decision makers, research biologists, conservation professionals and donors, in order to raise awareness of the Agreement, promote membership, debate regional priorities, stimulate international cooperation and develop project initiatives. Where possible, the workshops should be linked with those of other relevant CMS or partner-Convention/organisation activities, so as to increase synergy and maximize cost-effectiveness.

Indicative budget: € 75,000 per regional workshop
 Duration: 1 per year
 Activities: Regional workshop and follow-up

26. Regional AEWA Information Centres (AP 6.3)

In order to make the AEWA guidelines more accessible to conservation practitioners in the Agreement area, it is proposed to create a network of regional information centres building on the network of Regional Centres established under the WOW project. Each centre would maintain a translated catalogue of relevant AEWA technical resolutions and guideline documents in the regional languages (i.e. Arabic, Russian and French) and would use the majority of its budget to translate the documents most in demanded by conservation practitioners and making them available through the Internet.

Indicative budget: € 10,000 p.a. per subregion
 Duration: ongoing
 Activities: Translation of documents

27. Linking of wetland visitor centres at internationally important wetlands along the East Atlantic Flyway, under the Migratory Birds for People (MBP) programme (AP 6.3)

Wetland centres perform a vital role in raising awareness of the importance and beauty of wetlands, supporting local people to visit, learn and take action. Every year, human wetland centre visitors witness avian visitors passing through, or spending the season there. Like many habitats, wetlands have become increasingly fragmented, but one thing that links them, very obviously, is migratory birds. The MBP programme (Migratory Birds for People) aims to help wetland centre staff to improve awareness raising of their visitors about the importance of their local wetland as part of an international life support system for birds, as well as being part of a wider wetland resource that provides many benefits to humans and wildlife. Through information sharing, professional staff exchanges, training, project development and better communication, MBP aims to deliver great opportunities for raising public awareness of why wetlands matter, as well as some practical outcomes for monitoring, planning and project delivery for migratory birds. The centres also provide an excellent public forum for sharing knowledge already generated, such as through the Critical Sites Network tool and other national and international sources of scientific data. Through the MBP, these resources can be disseminated to visitors and local stakeholders, such as farmers and tourist boards, in a publicly-accessible format. A focus on citizen science could also provide information generated in and around the centres.

Indicative budget:	€ 10,000 plus match funding from within partnership.
Duration:	Ongoing. Initial work programme for 5 years.
Activities:	Education and public engagement on site; sharing of information and exchange visits; development of new engagement and communication tools; capacity building for centre staff; fund-raising and project development.

F. IMPLEMENTATION

28. **Supporting the development of national AEWA implementation working groups, especially in Africa (AP 7)**

A potentially powerful mechanism for enhancing the implementation of AEWA is the establishment and ongoing operation of national implementation working groups. Useful synergies can result from such implementation working groups also covering related MEAs, especially CMS and Ramsar National Committees. To ensure the establishment of effective national implementation working groups of this sort, it would be desirable to have a staff member located at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat or equivalent. Their remit could include facilitating initial preparatory workshops in each priority country involving all relevant stakeholders, training personnel in a) identification of national priorities for AEWA implementation b) incorporation of AEWA objectives into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and other relevant policies and c) dissemination of resources, such as guidelines, to key decision makers, managers etc. to assist in implementation. It may make sense for such an officer also to be co-funded by CMS and Ramsar so that the agendas of each MEA can be promoted in a coordinated, synergistic way. A list of priority Parties for such support should be drawn up.

Indicative budget: € 175,000 per year, per regional programme
Duration: 5 years
Activities: Coordination, workshops/training courses, materials, follow-up

29. **Revising Guidelines on the preparation of National Single Species Action Plans (SSAP) for migratory waterbirds (AP 7.3)**

Since the development of the original guidelines 2005, there have been advances based on the experience of the production and implementation of national single species action plan and the development of further guidance on the production and implementation of SSAPs, especially through the use of Species Working Groups of International Single Species Action Plans. Therefore the guidelines should be revised and updated. The update must include, among others:

- An account of the value of national SSAPs compared to international SSAPs;
- The addition of a new step: *'Hold a workshop involving key experts and stakeholders'*, which is in line with other guidance on SSAP production and experience;
- Harmonisation of guidelines with the ToR for working groups to implement SSAPs and with The Revised Format for the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan;
- Examples from the SSAPs implementation report;
- An update of the Appendices.

Indicative budget: € 30,000 (plus translation and printing)
Duration: 1 year
Activities: Desk study, conservation guidelines

30. **Revising the Conservation Guidelines on Sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds (AP 7.3)**

Waterbirds are harvested widely throughout the Agreement area for any number of reasons, which may include recreation, trade, livelihoods and even for medicinal or other purposes. The existing Conservation Guidelines focus largely on recreational hunting and do not adequately address other motivations for harvesting waterbirds.

It is therefore proposed that these Guidelines should be completely rewritten to take into account the varying motivations for and methods of harvesting of waterbirds, this may involve developing separate Guidelines. In general the guidance should draw upon the Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, whilst focusing on the discourse related to bushmeat for use associated with livelihoods and the Council of Europe Charter on Hunting and Biodiversity for use associated with recreational hunting.

The results should be presented as new Conservation guidelines.

Indicative budget: € 150,000
Duration: 2 years
Activities: Reviews, workshops, translations, publications