



REPORT 2016-2018

OF THE SECRETARIAT

Dear AEWA MOP7 participants,

The upcoming MOP7 is a good moment to look backwards. At MOP6 we were celebrating our 20th anniversary. Still so young to face so many challenges but already old enough to take stock of lessons learned.



A collective positive spirit unifies the Secretariat staff members and we are proud to share with you this report. Your support as Parties or NGOs gives us the energy to go ahead and to fulfil the numerous mandates given by the different MOPs.

Despite a small budget, we were able to deliver on many matters. When implemented on the ground, the measures decided by Parties make a real difference and add great extra value to the national efforts.

This report will allow you to make your own judgement. AEWA is a wide family spread across 119 Range States from the high Arctic to the southern tip of Africa. It is a pleasure for the Secretariat to work with so many different cultures, so many people dedicated to waterbird conservation. I am convinced that all of us are aiming at protecting migratory waterbirds all along their flyways. Migratory birds undertake epic journeys but the cooperation that we humans have to engage in is also of fantastic proportions, if we are to save this natural treasure.

MOP7 will adopt a Strategic Plan and a Plan of Action for Africa which will clearly shape flyway conservation for the future beyond 2020. Thanks to all of you who contribute in one way or another to the success of this ambitious objective.

Jacques Trouvilliez
Executive Secretary



The present report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period between 01 December 2015 and 30 September 2018.

The report is divided into five sections:

1. Organization of the Secretariat;
2. General Management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organizations;
3. Science, Implementation and Compliance;
4. Capacity-Building; and
5. Communication, Information Management and Outreach.

Activities reported in detail in other MOP7 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 the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – now known as United Nations Environment - and/or UN Heads of Agencies etc. are not specifically mentioned in this report.

Lesser Flamingos
(*Phoeniconaias minor*) in flight ©
Mark D. Anderson



ORGANISATION OF THE SECRETARIAT



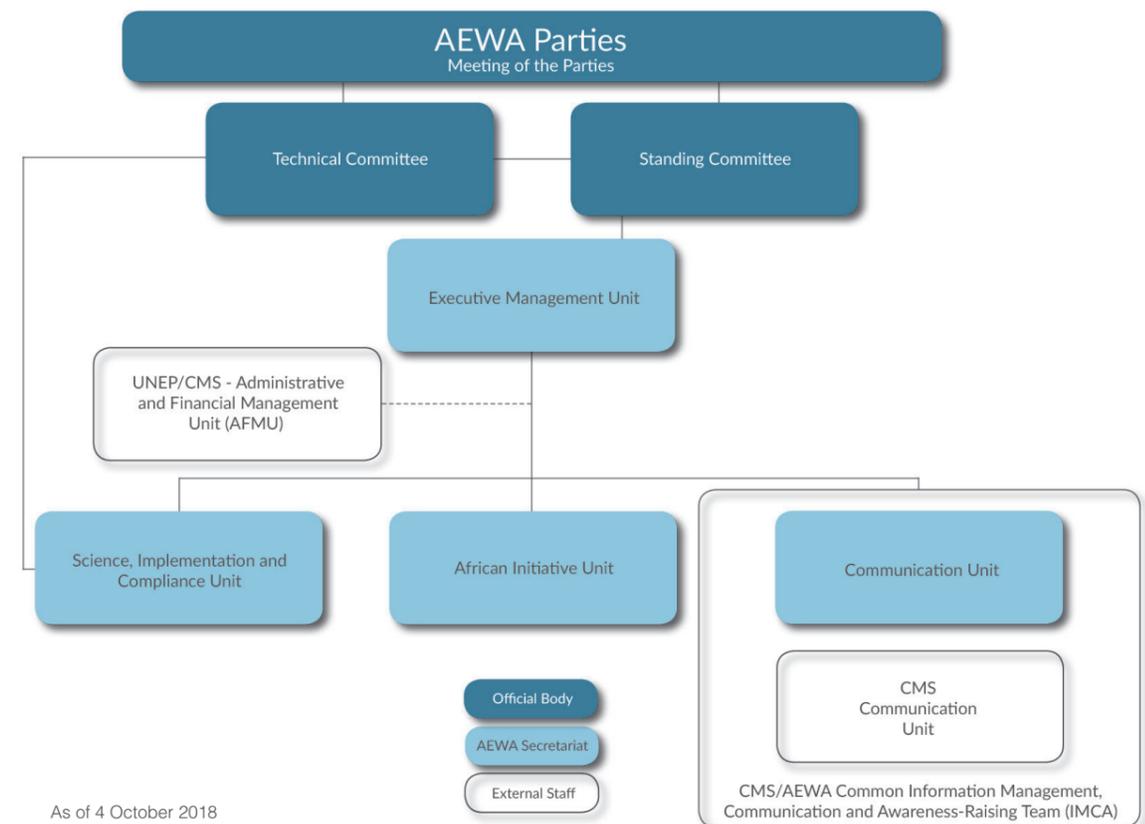
The Secretariat is organized into four major areas of work called units (see Figure 1 – Organizational Structure). The individual staff members and units work closely as a team, interacting with each other on cross-cutting issues on a daily basis.

The staffing of the Secretariat (Figure 2), which was presented in the context of section 1 in previous Secretariat reports, is now presented in document AEWA/MOP 7.36 - Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues in 2016-2018 for more coherence and to avoid duplication of information.

Sociable Lapwings (*Vanellus gregarius*)
© Maxim Koshkin

Photo on the left: Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*)
© Wim Werrelman

Figure 1. Organizational Structure of the Secretariat



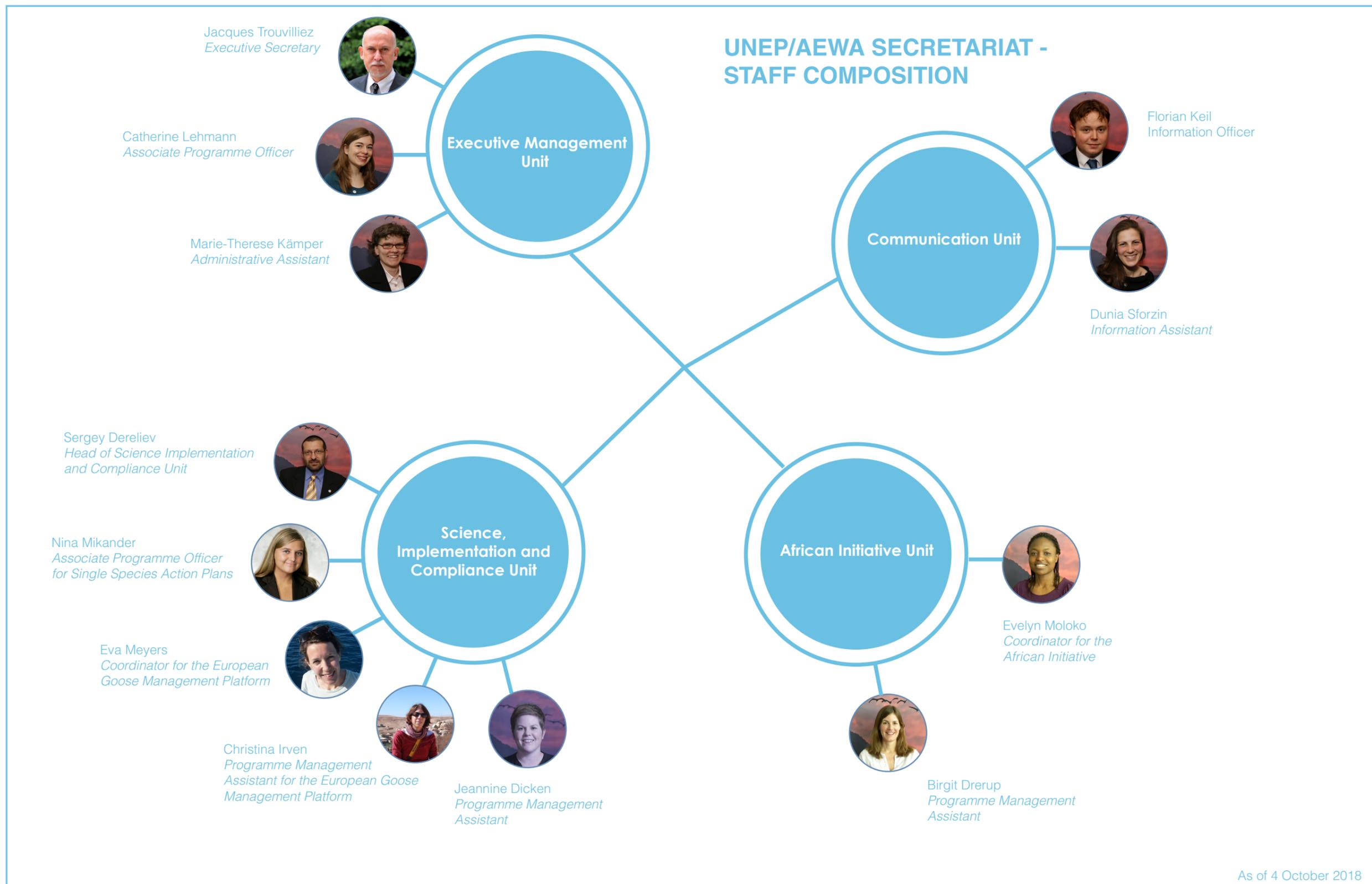


Figure 2. UNEP/AEWA Secretariat Staff Composition

Each staff member has an annual work plan, which is approved and assessed annually as well as on a mid-term basis by his/her direct supervisor. All the work plans are examined by the Executive Secretary, in order to ensure synergies

between the units and to avoid duplication of efforts. The Secretariat nonetheless continues to face a number of challenges in the delivery of its mandate and is rather stretched. This is due to the ever-increasing range of services to be

delivered without a corresponding increase in human resources.

Without the extension of the part-time positions through voluntary contributions, the availability

of staff funded entirely through voluntary contributions and the support of interns, the Secretariat would not have been in a position to deliver all the services requested over the triennium 2016-2018.



GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Recruitment of Parties

Since MOP6, two new Contracting Parties have acceded to AEWA (Belarus on 01 April 2016 and Botswana on 01 November 2017), bringing the total number of Parties to 77.

In addition, significant progress has been made in the accession process of a number of African non-Party Range States. Contacts at high level were established during various meetings, amongst them the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2) in May 2016, the CMS COP12 in Manila in October 2017, the UNFCCC COP23 in Bonn in November 2017 and the Ramsar African Pre-COP13 meeting in Senegal, in February 2018. Furthermore, a multi-stakeholder consultation workshop was organised to re-energise the process of Cameroon's accession to AEWA (7-8 December 2016 in Yaoundé, Cameroon), with the financial support of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN).

Through the same voluntary contribution, the Agreement Text has been translated into Portuguese for the benefit of the Portuguese-speaking Range States, thanks to the support of the Government of Switzerland. It contributes to facilitating the accession of the Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa (Angola, Cabo Verde, Mozambique and Sao Tomé-e-Príncipe).¹

The recruitment of Arabic-speaking countries was hampered by the lack of an accurate and updated Arabic translation of the Agreement Text. The latest version of the AEWA Text approved at MOP6 was kindly translated by the AEWA Depositary and reviewed by some Arabic-speaking Range States. The new Arabic text was distributed to all Arabic-speaking AEWA Range States.²

The Secretariat has been regularly communicating with Saudi Arabia on the accession process, which is quite advanced, and will hopefully be concluded soon.

Efforts to recruit additional Parties in Europe and Central Asia, including Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Serbia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Russia, are also ongoing.

¹ The Portuguese translation of the Agreement Text has been available on the AEWA website since May 2017 at: http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/aewa_agreement_text_2016_2018_Portuguese.pdf

² The new Arabic translation can be downloaded from the AEWA website at: http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/Agreement%20text%20and%20annexes%202016-2018_Arabic_March%202017_0.pdf

Meetings of the AEWA Standing Committee

The 11th Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Bonn, Germany on 14 November 2015, back to back with the MOP6 with the aim of electing the Chair (Uganda) and the Vice-Chair (France) of the Committee.

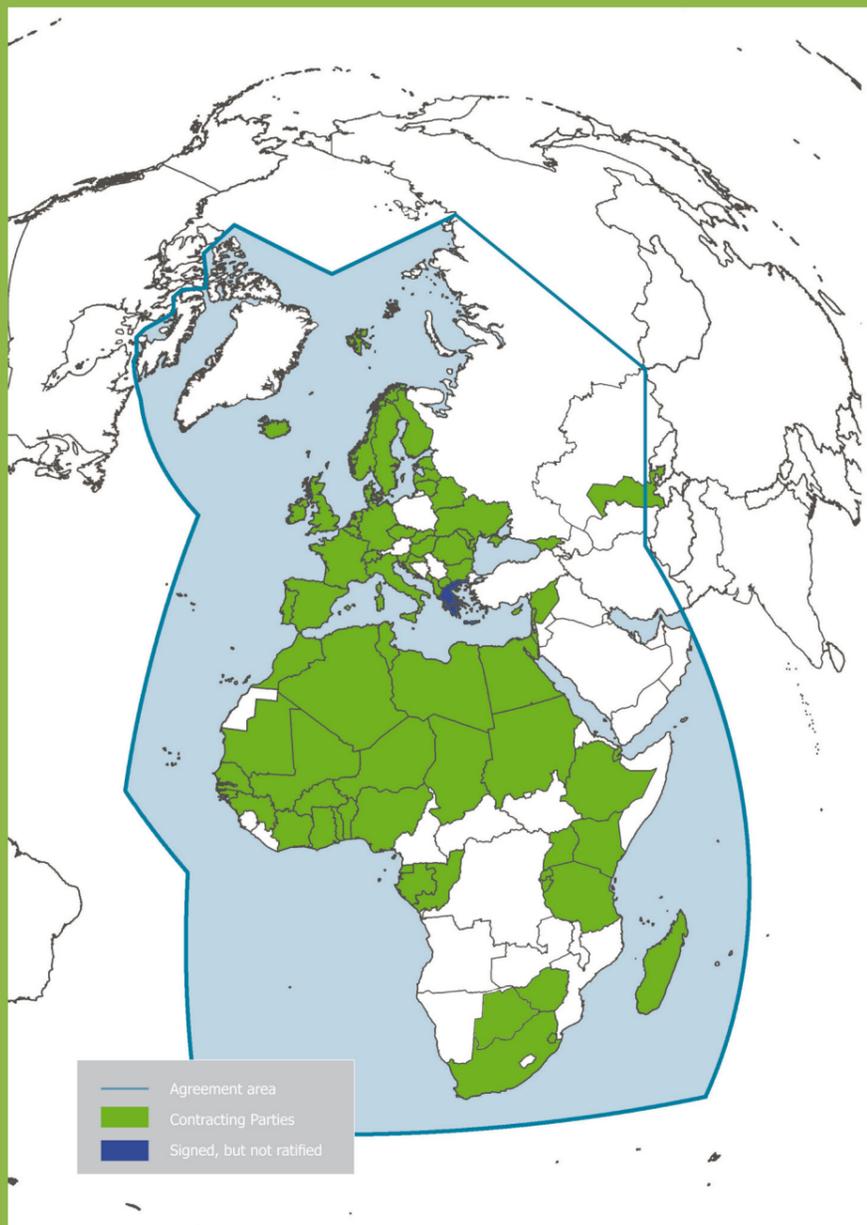
The StC11 meeting report is available at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/11th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>.

The 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Paris, France on 31 January - 01 February 2017, at the kind invitation of the Government of France. The StC12 meeting report is available at:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_stc12_meeting_report_en.pdf

The 13th Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in The Hague, the Netherlands on 03 - 05 July 2018 at the kind invitation of the Government of the Netherlands. The meeting was convened with the aim to review and approve all the documents to be submitted to MOP7. Detailed information is available at: <https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/13th-meeting-aewa-standing-committee>

For more information, please refer to document AEWA/MOP 7.6 Report of the Standing Committee.



The AEWA Agreement area with Contracting Parties highlighted in green © UNEP/AEWA Secretariat

Meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee

The 13th Meeting of the Technical Committee was held in Nasholim, Israel, 14-17 March 2016, at the kind invitation of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, in collaboration with the Israel Ornithological Center of the Society for the Protection of Nature. The meeting was convened with the aim to plan in detail the implementation of the Technical Committee Work Plan 2016-2018. The TC13 meeting report is available at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/13th-meeting-aewa-technical-committee>

The 14th Meeting of the Technical Committee was held in Bonn, Germany, 10-13 April 2018. The meeting was convened with the aim to review and approve all the scientific and technical documents to be submitted to MOP7. The TC14 meeting report is available at: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/14th-meeting-aewa-technical-committee>.

For more information, please refer to document AEWA/MOP 7.7 Report of the Technical Committee.



Cooperation with UN Environment and Other Organizations

UN Environment and the CMS Family

The relationships with the UN Environment (UNEP) headquarters and United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON) have been strengthened in 2016, the AEWA Executive Secretary visited the headquarters three times: in February at the invitation of the Executive Director (ED), in May to participate at the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2) and in November to participate in a mandatory training (Management Development Programme).

On 29 February 2016, the three Executive Secretaries of the CMS Family (CMS, EUROBATS and AEWA) met the Executive Director to discuss how to increase the synergies within the CMS Family and within the other biodiversity-related Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). An Action Plan was adopted and approved in April by the ED. Following this Action Plan, a Strategic Meeting is convened every three months amongst the three CMS Family Executive Secretaries to liaise on the different cross-cutting areas of work including the accession of Parties, fundraising activities, up-coming meetings, programmatic synergies and common services

(CMS Administrative and Fund Management Unit (AFMU) and the Joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising (IMCA) team). A monthly meeting on administrative issues is also held between the three Executive Secretaries and the head of the Administrative and Finance Management Unit.

On programmatic synergies, some items such as the illegal killing of birds, lead poisoning or the energy sector are now led by CMS following COP decisions broadening the mandate on these issues under the Convention. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is, however, still involved in the CMS Illegal Killing Task Force, the Energy Task Force and the Bird Poisoning Working Groups, as appropriate. These programmatic synergies have allowed the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to focus more on AEWA-specific issues. In the meantime, the Secretariat uses every opportunity to promote common CMS Family issues, for example through the most recent op-ed on lead ammunition by the AEWA Executive Secretary (<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/opinion-banning-lead-shot-good-birds-people-world-migratory-bird-day-may-12-13>).

In addition, with regard to programmatic synergies, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat continues to collaborate closely with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and the CMS Raptors MOU in

Synergies with biodiversity-related MEAs © pixabay.com

Photo on page 8: Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*) © Hans Overduin

particular, both on issues related directly to bird conservation and sustainable use, as well as to wider conservation issues such as bycatch. The main areas of collaboration are outlined in more detail below, under the chapter on Science, Implementation and Compliance.

Ramsar Convention

The cooperation with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention has focused mainly on African topics. The Coordinator of the African Initiative attended the African regional preparatory meeting for the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (February 2018) and was able to promote synergy with the Ramsar Secretariat's African Unit, as well as develop fruitful contacts with Ramsar National Focal points and many other stakeholders. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will also attend the 13th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties held in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, from 21 to 29 October 2018.

The AEWA African Initiative Unit and the African regional team at the Ramsar Convention Secretariat collaborated to secure funding from the Regional Partnership for the Conservation of the Marine and Coastal Zones of West Africa (PRCM) to support the participation of the three CMB2 project NGOs from Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal at the GlobWetland Africa technical training workshop and official launch of the GlobWetland Africa toolbox, organised in the margins of the Ramsar African pre-COP13 meeting (February 2018 in Dakar).

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is exploring possible collaboration with the Ramsar Secretariat for the organization of an AEWA training-of-trainers workshop on flyway conservation for francophone West and Central Africa, scheduled for early 2019, with funding secured by AEWA from the European Commission.

The Ramsar Secretariat is also a partner of the RESSOURCE project (see below) and both Secretariats collaborate in the framework of this project.

Conservation Evidence

A new partnership has been launched with the information resource initiative, Conservation Evidence. Based at the University of Cambridge, UK, with collaborators and advisers in all continents of the world, Conservation Evidence is a free, authoritative information resource designed to support decisions on maintaining and restoring global biodiversity. The idea is to give conservationists access to the very latest

and most relevant ecological knowledge to support their policy or management decisions.

(For further information, please see: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-launches-new-partnership-conservation-evidence>).

BirdLife International

In May 2016, 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 implementation of International Single Species Action Plans (ISSAPs) were reviewed and the WMBD partnership discussed.

The CMS Family and BirdLife International joined forces at the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2) held in Nairobi 23-27 May 2016 to raise awareness of guidelines devised to ensure that renewable energy installations are deployed in ways that have no adverse impact on migratory species such as birds and bats. CMS, AEWA, EUROBATS and BirdLife International organised a side event on "Reconciling the Deployment of Energy Technologies with Migratory Species" and the AEWA Executive Secretary and CMS Executive Secretary have delivered speeches. (For further information, please see: http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/unea_energy_flyer_1.pdf)

A four-day summit was convened by BirdLife International in association with the MAVA Foundation, the Ornithological Society of the Middle East (OSME) and CMS, among others. This summit took place in Abu Dhabi from 23-26 April 2018, with the participation of many key players in global bird conservation including NGOs, the scientific community, governments and the CMS Family. The main item under discussion was how migratory birds can be better protected at every point of their arduous journeys along the flyways. The Head of the AEWA Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit attended this meeting. More information can be found here: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/ground-breaking-flyways-summit-held-abu-dhabi>

Another series of bilateral talks with BirdLife International and RSPB were held in June 2018 in the United Kingdom and the focus was on the role and contribution of the BirdLife network to the implementation of the new AEWA Strategic Plan 2019-2027.

The Coordinator of the African Initiative was

nominated Chair of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for phase two of the BirdLife/MAVA Foundation project on the Conservation of Migratory Birds (CMB) along the coast of West Africa (Guinea, October 2017). She attended the three PSC Meetings under this project, in March and October 2016 in Dakar, and in October 2017 in Conakry. This contributed to further align CMB project activities to support AEWA implementation and promote further collaboration with AEWA and the project partners.

International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat attended the 63rd General Assembly of the CIC, 22-23 April 2016, in Brussels and the 65th General Assembly of the CIC, 3-5 May 2018, in Madrid. On both occasions, the Executive Secretary participated

at special events on migratory birds and presented the concept of adaptive management for migratory waterbirds. These meetings were also a good opportunity to meet with other key Range States. CIC is also a partner of the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign.

FAO and FFEM and the RESSOURCE Project

The acronym RESSOURCE stands for the project entitled the French equivalent of "Strengthening expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa on birds and their rational use for communities and their environment". The ecosystems at the core of the project are based on the Senegal River Valley, the Inner Niger Delta, Lake Chad and parts of the River Nile. These are areas upon which almost one billion people depend for agriculture, rearing of livestock, fishing and hunting, and which are equally of critical importance to millions of waterbirds.

The project aims to evaluate the sustainability of exploiting the resources represented by waterbirds thanks to its integrated approach which includes: (i) assessing the resources in terms of the numbers, distribution and socio-economic importance, especially for rural communities (ii) preserving habitats and (iii) proposing conservation measures at community level. This project led by FAO and supported by FFEM involves not only the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat,

Fundraising

From January 2016 to date, voluntary contributions received were earmarked for the :

- Coordination of the African Initiative and related activities including development of the Plan of Action for Africa 2019-2027, organization of the AEWA African Pre-MOP7 meeting in Eswatini and waterbird monitoring in Africa;
- Development of the Strategic Plan 2019-2027;
- European Goose Management Platform;
- Development and coordination of implementation of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plans for the Lesser White-fronted Goose, the Velvet Scoter, the White-headed Duck, the Dalmatian Pelican, the Eurasian Curlew, the White-winged Flufftail and for the Grey Crowned-crane;
- Organization of a flyway training of trainer's workshop for francophone Western and Central Africa;
- Organisation of the World Migratory Bird Day;
- IKI project on climate resilient site network across the African-Eurasian flyway; and
- Various documents for the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties, i.e. the 7th edition of the Conservation Status Report, revised Conservation Guidelines on Waterbird Monitoring, Guide to Guidance on Reducing the Impact of Marine Fisheries on Migratory Seabird Populations Listed under AEWA and Assessment of the Threats Posed by Marine Litter to Migratory Seabird Populations Listed under AEWA.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would like to express its appreciation for the financial support received towards the implementation of the Agreement. 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 continuing global financial crisis. The Secretariat is therefore spending more time on fundraising rather than on implementation. It should be stressed that some of the mandatory reports for MOP7, such as the Site Network Review, have not been commissioned due to the lack of funding.

For more information, please refer to document AEWA/MOP 7.36 Report of the Secretariat on Finance and Administrative Issues in 2012-2015 and 2016-2018.



Dalmatian Pelican
(*Pelecanus crispus*) ©
Santanu Nandy

but also other key partners such as: ONCFS, CIRAD, OMPO, Wetlands International, BirdLife International and the Ramsar Convention, among others.

The Executive Secretary attended the first project Steering Committee meeting at the FAO Headquarters on 9-11 May 2017, where the programme of work was discussed between all the partners.

For further information, please see:
<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/conserving-waterbirds-africa%E2%80%99s-sahelo-saharan-region>

The initial activities and outcomes of the project can be assessed here:
<http://www.eip.gov.eg/Upload/Publications/project%20ressource-%20july%202017.pdf>

Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)

The campaign "Flight of the Swan" tracked the Bewick's Swan on its migration route from the Russian Arctic to Britain across 11 countries. Flying a paramotor, British conservationist Sacha Dench was following the migration route of the Bewick's Swans to understand the challenges these waterbirds face along their 7,000 km journey. AEWA was one of the International Partners alongside the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and Wetlands International, and this campaign was a perfect example of the flyway approach for bird conservation. In 2012, AEWA adopted the International Single Species Action Plan for the Bewick's Swan which aims to

reverse the decline of the North-west European population of the species and bring it back to a favourable conservation status.

Other Flyways: Northern America

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was invited to attend the XXI Meeting of the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management held in Ottawa, Canada, 16-19 May 2016. Bringing together stakeholders from Canada, the USA and Mexico, the meeting had a particular focus as it was "celebrating 100 years of conservation of migratory birds and their habitats and looking ahead to the next 100 years". In this context, during the plenary, the Executive Secretary of AEWA presented the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement as a model for conservation across continents. He showed that despite national and regional efforts, the conservation success is hampered if the flyway approach is not used as the basis for actions. As an intergovernmental treaty, AEWA is a tool for international cooperation for the flyway which encompasses the highest number of Range States – 119 - in the world.

On 26 October 2017, in the margins of the CMS COP12, a Partnership Agreement between Environment for the Americas (EFTA) and the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats was signed. The purpose is to develop a unified global recognition and appreciation of migratory birds and the need for their conservation across the globe. The result of the



Cape Gannets
(*Morus capensis*) ©
Sylvain Cordier

cooperation is that the International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) organized by EFTA for the Americas and the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) organized by AEWA and CMS are now merged with, "World Migratory Bird Day" chosen as the official name for the new globally unified campaign.

Other Flyways: East Asian-Australasian

Mr Sergey Dereliev, Head of the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been nominated and elected as a member of the Technical Committee of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) in March 2018. This exchange with the partnership in the East Asian-Australasian flyway will allow for a closer cooperation and coordination between the two instruments.

MOP6 Proceedings and preparation of MOP7

The MOP6 proceedings have been published on the website and as hard copies, which were distributed to all Parties at the end of December 2016. The Secretariat is grateful to the BMU (Germany) for printing them.

The Secretariat has approached several Parties in order to identify a host for MOP7. The Standing Committee members and the Secretariat are grateful to the Government of South Africa for having generously offered to host the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP7).

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 document AEWA/MOP 7.11 – Report on the Implementation of the African Initiative and the Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2018.





SCIENCE, IMPLEMENTATION & COMPLIANCE

Development of the Strategic Plan 2019-2027

Building on AEWA's first Strategic Plan (SP), which initially covered the period 2009–2017 but was extended to 2018 by MOP6, the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019–2027 will provide the framework for implementation of the Agreement by the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Technical Committee, Secretariat and Partners. It covers three complete triennia (or intersessional periods) between Meetings of the Parties (MOPs), from MOP7 (when the draft Strategic Plan 2019–2027 will be tabled for discussion and final adoption by Contracting Parties), to MOP10 due to be held in 2027.

MOP6 instructed the Standing Committee, working with the Technical Committee and Secretariat, to revise the existing Strategic Plan and to present a draft covering the period 2019–2027 for consideration at MOP7. The Standing Committee established a Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) with participation as follows:

Parties: Uganda (Chair of Standing Committee and Chair of SPWG), France (Vice-Chair of Standing Committee), Georgia, Ghana, Libya, Netherlands, (all Standing Committee members), plus the EU and nine other Parties (appointed on a 'first-come, first-served' basis) – Benin, Eswatini, Germany, Czech Republic, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, Tanzania, and the United Kingdom.

Technical Committee: Chair & Vice-Chair, three thematic experts, invited CEPA expert, NGO members (CIC, IUCN, Wetlands International).

Observers and Partners: CMS, AEWA African Initiative Technical Support Unit, BirdLife International, FACE, OMPO, WWT.

A facilitated meeting of the SPWG was held in Bonn, 28–30 June 2016, with a focus on the findings of an evaluation of the existing Strategic Plan and identified some of the key elements to be included in the new Strategic Plan, including provisional Objectives and content for many of the associated Targets and Actions. For the final report on the implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009–2018, please see document AEWA/MOP 7.10.

A preliminary consultation draft was circulated to members of the SPWG on 26 September 2016. A revised draft was produced to take account of comments from Working Group members received by the 31 October 2016. Following the comments, a draft of the SP was transmitted to all Contracting Parties (in both English and French) in April 2017. Based on feedback from Parties, a final draft was produced in July 2017 and forwarded for consideration by MOP7 (please see document AEWA/MOP7.15).

It should be noted that, in parallel, a new draft Plan of Action for Africa 2019–2027 has been prepared following the same process (please see document AEWA/MOP7.16).



Richards Bay, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa © Sergey Dereliev, www.derelev.com

Photo on page 16:
Eurasian Spoonbill
(*Platalea leucorodia*)
© Boris Belchev

Photos:
Black-tailed Godwit
(*Limosa limosa*) ©
Astrid Kant
Northern Bald Ibis
(*Geronticus eremita*)
© Torsten Pröhl
Lesser White-
fronted Goose
(*Anser erythropus*) ©
Ingar Jostein Øien

AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans and AEWA International Species Working Groups

During this triennium, the Secretariat facilitated the production of five International Species Action and Management Plans, which are expected to be adopted at MOP7.

Two new AEWA International Single Species Action Plans were developed for the Velvet Scoter and the Dalmatian Pelican, as well as a revised Action Plan for the White-headed Duck. All three Plans were developed under the framework of the EU LIFE EuroSAP project, coordinated by BirdLife International.

Two draft AEWA International Single Species Management Plans were developed for the Barnacle Goose and the Greylag Goose (NW/SW European Population) and will fall under the framework of the AEWA European Goose Management Platform after their adoption. These drafts are presented in documents AEWA/MOP 7.23-7.27.

An overview on the current status of the establishment and coordination of AEWA International Species Expert and Working Groups is provided in the MOP document 'Summary of the Current Status of Single Species Action Plan and Species Management Plan Production and Coordination with Recommendations to MOP for Extension, Revision or Retirement of Plans' (document AEWA/MOP 7.21).



AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group

The 2nd Meeting of the North-West European Breeding Range States of the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group took place in The Hague, the Netherlands on the 23-24 November 2016, hosted by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs.

The 1st regional meeting of the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group for the countries hosting the species during winter along the East Atlantic Flyway, took place in Dakar, Senegal from 13-14 November 2017.

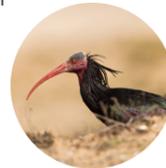
Hosted by the Dutch Ambassador to Senegal at the Ambassador's Residence, the meeting was chaired by Colonel Lamine Kane, Head of the Directorate of National Parks of the Ministry of Environment of Senegal.



AEWA Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group

The 2nd meeting of the AEWA Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group took place on 25-27 September 2017. The Meeting was hosted by the Government of Morocco in Agadir and facilitated by the Coordinator of the Group, Chris Bowden from RSPB and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The major outcome of this meeting is the triennial implementation plan, which defined the actions to be undertaken on the delivery of the ISSAP.

Further information can be found here: <http://www.unep-aeewa.org/en/meeting/2nd-meeting-aeewa-northern-bald-ibis-international-working-group>



AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group

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 3rd Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group was kindly hosted by the Norwegian Environment Agency at their premises in Trondheim on 12-14 April 2016.

June 2017 marked the end of the 6-year EU LIFE+ project on "Safeguarding the Lesser White-fronted Goose along its European Flyways" (LIFE10 NAT/GR/000638) in which the AEWA Secretariat was a partner. Key outcomes of the project, which have, in particular, benefited the wider conservation efforts for the species, include the adoption of a common monitoring scheme (including identification and monitoring training across the flyways) for the species as well as the decision to establish a network of critical sites. The project was one of the 2016 winners of the European Natura 2000 Award, placed first in the category "Cross-border cooperation and Networking".

Additional activities included the implementation of actions to reduce the threat of illegal killing to Lesser White-fronted Geese in the Ob River Valley, Russia during autumn migration in 2016 and 2017, a project to assess the motivations behind illegal killing of Lesser White-fronted Geese in Northern



Kazakhstan in autumn 2017, expeditions to Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan during the winter of 2017-2018 to identify and monitor potential key wintering sites as well as raise awareness of the species and to enhance monitoring capacity.

Funding for these activities, as well as the AEWA Associate Programme Officer post has kindly been provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Finnish Ministry of Environment, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and the EU Commission.

Benguela coastal seabirds

During the course of 2016, the Secretariat concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation with BirdLife South Africa, which will be coordinating the implementation of the multi-species action plan for the Benguela coastal seabirds. BirdLife South Africa is providing a coordinator on a part-time basis.



Velvet Scoter

An action planning workshop was held on 4-6 October 2016 in Vilnius, Lithuania as part of the development of the Velvet Scoter Single Species Action Plan. It was hosted by the Lithuanian Ministry of Environment, organised by the Lithuanian Ornithological Society, and facilitated by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. This work has been undertaken in the framework of the EuroSAP project supported by the EU Life programme and coordinated by BirdLife International. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has co-sponsored this project. The draft species action plan is submitted for review and approval to MOP7 (please see document AEWA/MOP 7.23).



Dalmatian Pelican

Similarly, to the Velvet Scoter, a workshop was hosted by the Greek Ministry of Environment and Energy on 22-24 November 2016 at Lithotopos, Lake Kerkini National Park contributing to the development of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Dalmatian Pelican. This workshop was organised by the Hellenic Ornithological Society and facilitated by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

This work has been undertaken in the framework of the EuroSAP project supported by the EU Life programme and coordinated by BirdLife International. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has co-sponsored this project. This draft species action plan is also submitted for review and approval to MOP7 (please see document AEWA/MOP 7.25).



White-headed Duck

The AEWA White-headed Duck International Working Group was convened by the Secretariat in 2016 and the 1st Meeting of the Working Group was hosted by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment on the 24-26 October 2016 at its premises in Madrid, Spain. The meeting was organised by SEO/BirdLife Spain under the framework of the EuroSAP project supported by the EU LIFE programme and coordinated by BirdLife International. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has co-sponsored this project. The main objective of the meeting was to prepare a revision of the current CMS/AEWA Action Plan for the species, which was adopted in 2008. This draft revised Species Action Plan is submitted for review and approval to MOP7 (please see document AEWA/MOP 7.24).



Long-tailed Duck

The Secretariat concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT), which will be coordinating the AEWA European Sea Ducks International Working Group. This Working Group will be expected to coordinate the implementation of the AEWA Long-tailed Duck International Single Species Action Plan adopted at MOP6 as well as the International Action Plan for the Velvet Scoter, which is expected to be adopted at MOP7 (see above). WWT is providing a coordinator on a part-time basis.



Eurasian Curlew

The Secretariat also concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), which will be coordinated by the AEWA Eurasian Curlew International Working Group. RSPB is also providing a coordinator on a part-time basis. The 1st Meeting of the AEWA Eurasian Curlew International Working Group - N. a. arquata Breeding Range States, was hosted by the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), with additional support provided by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) on 4-6 September 2018 in Aberlady (Scotland), United Kingdom.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has supported the first World Curlew Day on 21 April 2018, a grassroots initiative launched by environmental organizations such as BirdLife International and Wetlands International. It is a one-day global event aiming to raise awareness about the plight of curlews and to encourage activities to help them.



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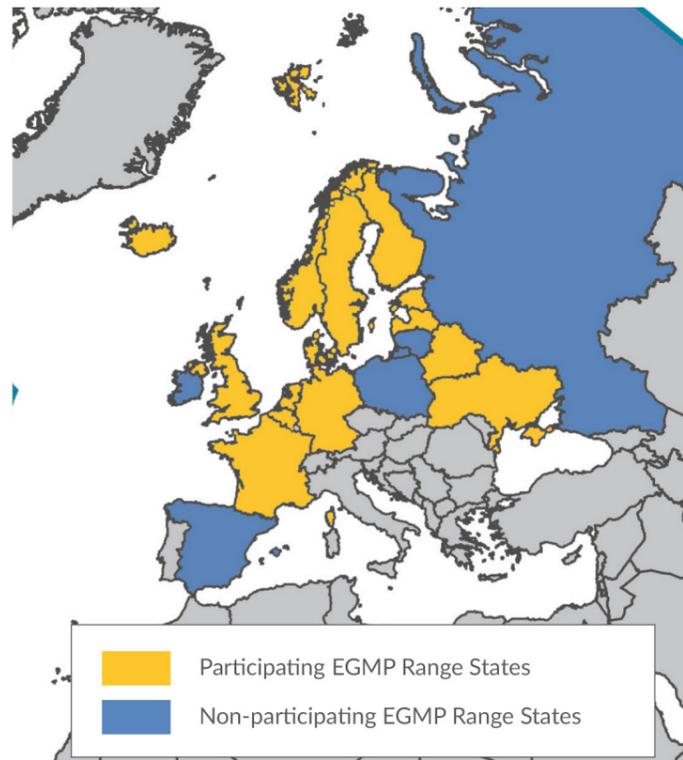


3rd Meeting of the AWEA European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG3) © provincie Fryslân



European Goose Management Platform

Following the mandate by MOP6 (see Resolution 6.4), the Secretariat convened a negotiation meeting on 11-12 May 2016 that was hosted in



Paris by the French Ministry of the Environment, Energy and the Sea. The attending Range States

agreed on the establishment of the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP) under the modalities suggested by the Secretariat. As part of the EGMP, the Secretariat convened a European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), which is the decision-making body of this initiative and by nature is inter-governmental.

This Working Group is set to have annual meetings to decide on the annual regulations with respect to management of the goose populations under its remit. The first meeting of the EGM IWG took place on 14-16 December 2016 and was hosted in Kristianstad by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. This first meeting focused on the International Single Species Management Plan (ISSMP) for the Pink-footed Goose, which has been under implementation since 2012, and the newly approved (in 2015) International Single Species Action Plan (ISSAP) for the Taiga Bean Goose. The EGM IWG also agreed on its modus operandi and elected a chair country for the next biennial period.

The second meeting of the European Goose Management Working Group (EGM IWG2) took place on 15-16 June 2017 in Copenhagen, hosted by the Danish Ministry of Environment and Food, Environmental Protection Agency. At this second Meeting of the AWEA EGM IWG, working group members decided on the conservation and management measures to be implemented for the Svalbard population of the Pink-footed Goose and the Taiga Bean Goose. They also agreed on the way forward for the EGMP Task Forces, the national reporting process and project concepts such as a review of national hunting regulations and an EGMP communication strategy and work plan.

The EGMP Coordinator and a Programme Management Assistant were recruited in July 2017 and November 2017, respectively, to facilitate the coordination of the AWEA European Goose Management Platform.

The 3rd meeting of the EGM IWG (EGM IWG3) took place on 20-21 June 2018, back to back with the first face-to-face meeting of the EGMP Task Forces (18 June 2018) and the 2nd Management Planning Workshop for the Barnacle and Greylag Geese, in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, hosted by the Province of Friesland.

In addition, the Secretariat presented the adaptive harvest management approach at the flyway scale, as well as the main objectives of the EGMP at the 33rd International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB) Congress in Montpellier, France, on 22-25 August 2017. The Secretariat also attended two debates at the European Parliament; one in Strasbourg in January 2017 together with Professor Jesper Madsen and one in Brussels in March 2017. The UNEP/AWEA Secretariat also introduced the EGMP to the EU Member States at the meetings of the EU Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives (NADEG) in May 2017 at the European Commission in Brussels and is providing regular updates (November 2017 and May 2018). In addition, the flyway adaptive management approach has been presented at the 5th Pan-European Duck Symposium, Scotland, United Kingdom, 16-20 April 2018 and received the full support of the scientific community.

Barnacle Goose and Greylag Goose

The development of International Single Species Management Plans (ISSMPs) for the Barnacle Goose and the Greylag Goose was initiated in 2017 with funding provided by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, within the Ministry of Environment and Food, as well as the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality for the Barnacle Goose ISSMP and by the French Ministry for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition, the Norwegian Environment Agency, the French National Agency for Wildlife, the François Sommer Foundation and the French National Hunting Federation for the Greylag Goose ISSMP.

The first stakeholder workshop for the Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) took place on 12-14 June 2017 back-to-back with the EGM IWG2 and was kindly hosted by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency, within the Ministry of Environment and Food.

In addition, another species management

planning workshop was held on 4-6 October 2017, in Paris, France, focused on the Northwest/Southwest European population of the Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*). The workshop was kindly hosted by the French Ministry of Environment and the François Sommer Foundation.

Following these two workshops, the Secretariat and the EGMP Data Centre organized an internal management planning workshop that was held back-to-back with the first EGMP International Modelling Consortium Meeting in January 2018. The purpose of this workshop was to compile the information provided by Range States at the two species management planning workshops that were held in 2017 and to prepare the Framework for Action for the ISSMPs.

A combined management planning workshop for the Barnacle Goose and the Greylag Goose was held back-to-back with EGM IWG3, on 19 June 2018 in Leeuwarden, the Netherlands, and hosted by the Province of Friesland.

Following the workshop and extensive consultations with Range States final drafts for the two species have been produced in October 2018 for review and adoption at MOP7 (please see documents AWEA/MOP 7.26 and AWEA/MOP7.27).

Implementation Review Process

The main activity in 2016 related to the Implementation Review Process has been the on-the-spot appraisal mission to Iceland in conjunction with the Bern Convention Secretariat. The mission took place on 23-27 May 2016 and the report was finalised on 19 October 2016.

In September 2017 the Standing Committee opened an IRP inquiry with the Government of the United Kingdom over information about the hunting of the Greenland White-fronted Goose. For a complete overview, please see document AWEA/MOP 7.18.

Climate Resilient Site Network Project

The project "Climate resilient site network in the African-Eurasian flyway" launched at MOP6 in November 2015 is funded by the International Climate Initiative of the German Government and coordinated by Wetlands International. The Secretariat is involved as a co-funder and contributor. The project is entitled, and its concept developed on the basis of the AWEA climate change agenda and mandates from the MOP. It involves some site assessments, two pilot projects in Mali and Ethiopia, production of



Bird nets along the Mediterranean coast © Holger Schulz

guidelines and training of practitioners in African Parties.

The Secretariat is on the project's Steering Committee and participated in the face-to-face meetings in March 2016 in Bondo, Kenya, in April 2017 at Lake Langano in Ethiopia and in April 2018 in Ede, the Netherlands, as well as the other remote meetings of the Committee. The project is being implemented according to schedule despite certain complications related to safety and security at the pilot site in Mali.

The Critical Site Network Tool was revamped in the framework of the project and can now serve better as a useful information and decision-making tool for AEWA and Ramsar Range States and partners for waterbird conservation. A side-event at MOP7 will demonstrate the potential of this tool for national implementation of the Treaty.

Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative

The Secretariat continued to contribute to the implementation of the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI), established under the Arctic Council's biodiversity-related working group CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna). The Secretariat serves on the Steering Group for the African-Eurasian flyway and attended the AMBI Steering Group Meeting as well as the 1st AMBI Implementation Workshop organised by the CAFF Secretariat and hosted by the Dutch government on the 4-7 April 2016 on Texel in the Netherlands. The main activities in the AMBI work plan for the African-Eurasian flyway, which are being coordinated and implemented by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, pertain to reducing the threat of illegal killing of Lesser White-

fronted Geese, as well as to reducing the threat of afforestation to AEWA species in Iceland. The Secretariat also contributed to the midterm review of the AMBI 2015-2019 Workplan, which was concluded in April 2017.

CMS Multi-stakeholder Energy Task Force

The Secretariat is a member of the CMS Multi-stakeholder Task Force and took part at its second meeting in September 2017 in Bonn. For more information please see: <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/second-meeting-multi-stakeholder-energy-task-force>

The Secretariat was involved in the co-organization of side-events with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat in the margins of the UNFCCC meeting on 17 May 2017 (for further information, please see: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/energy-task-force-side-event-today-reconciling-energy-developments-migratory-species>).

CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT)

The Secretariat is also involved in the CMS MIKT and attended the joint meeting of the CMS MIKT and the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds that took place in June 2017 in Malta. For further information please see: <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/joint-meeting->

[cms-intergovernmental-task-force-illegal-killing-taking-and-trade-migratory](http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/joint-meeting-cms-intergovernmental-task-force-illegal-killing-taking-and-trade-migratory)

CMS Working Group on Preventing Poisoning in Migratory Birds

Another CMS initiative in which the Secretariat is closely involved is the Working Group on Preventing Poisoning in Migratory Birds. This has a strong relevance for AEWA, in particular, with respect to the mandate on phasing out the lead shot for hunting in wetlands, which the CMS Resolution 11.15 extended globally and to all

types of habitats. The Secretariat attended the second meeting of the Working Group in Toledo, Spain in February 2017. Amongst other things, the Working Group decided on the establishment of its Lead Task Group. For further information please see: <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/2nd-meeting-cms-preventing-poisoning-working-group-ppwg2>

Lead Shot Phase Out in the EU

In 2016, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) initiated a process of compiling a report and draft restriction proposal commissioned by the European Commission, in order to implement the AEWA provisions of phasing out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands. This involved an initial phase of providing evidence by various stakeholders to which the Secretariat responded, working together with the Technical Committee (TC). The Secretariat also attended an expert meeting at ECHA together with the TC Vice-chair, to review the compilation of evidence and support the drafting of the proposed text of the regulation.

Subsequently, the Secretariat - supported by the TC Vice-chair and other invited experts - has, since September 2017, been attending meetings of the relevant ECHA bodies (Risk Assessment Committee and Social and Economic Assessment Committee) as an accredited observer organization, providing expert advice on the further deliberations on the restriction proposal. The consultation process under ECHA was concluded in June 2018, after which deliberations are expected to continue within the EU REACH Committee during the winter of 2018/2019.

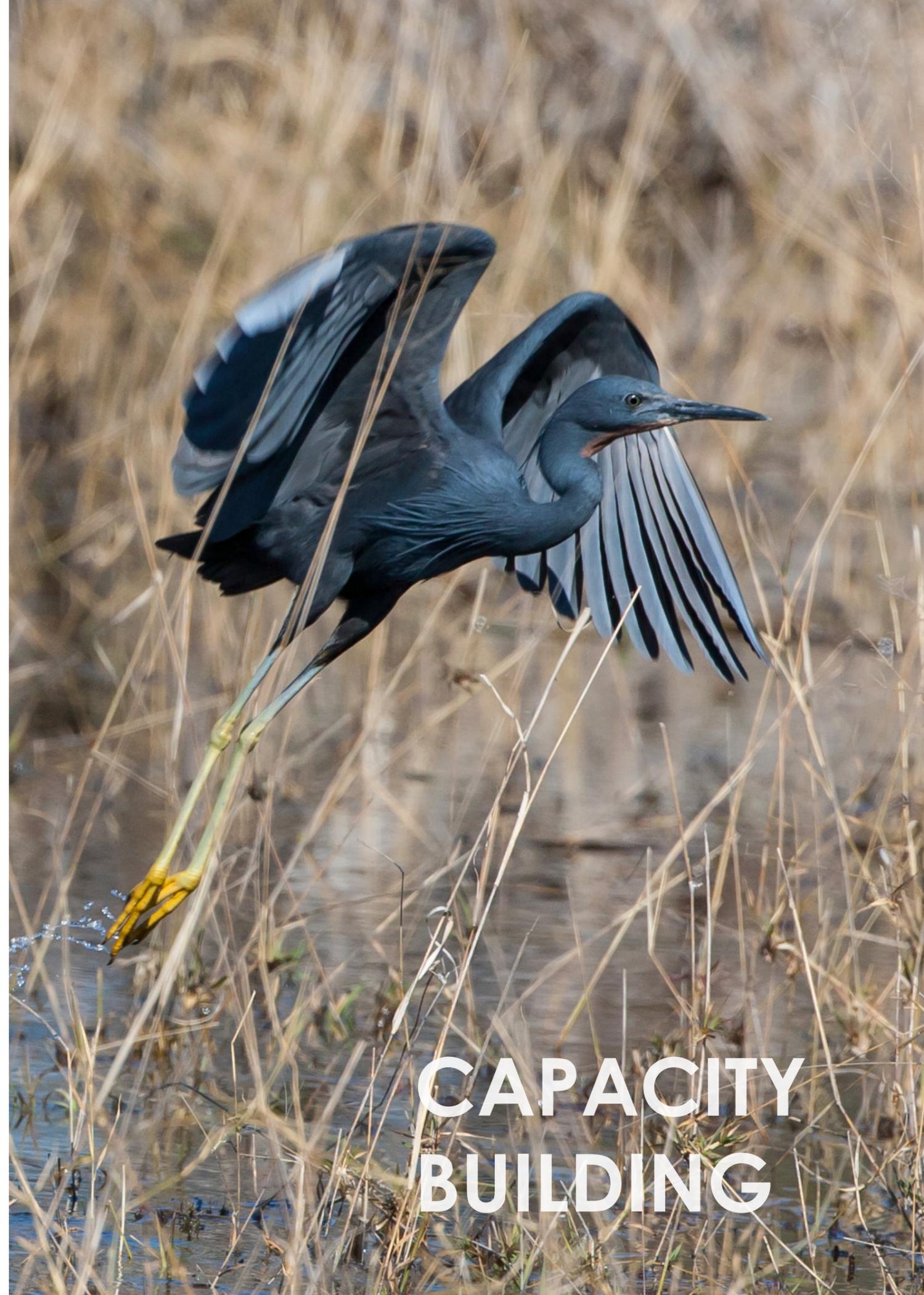


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AEWA Technical Series Publications

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

Technical Series No. 55 International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Northern Bald Ibis (<i>Geronticus eremita</i>) – Revision 1. Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 56 International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Taiga Bean Goose (<i>Anser fabalis fabalis</i>). Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 57 International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Long-tailed Duck (<i>Clangula hyemalis</i>) Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 58 International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Eurasian Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata arquata</i> <i>N. a. orientalis</i> and <i>N. a. suschkini</i>). Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 59 International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Grey Crowned-crane (<i>Balearica regulorum</i>). Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 60 International Multi-species Action Plan for the Conservation of Benguela Current Upwelling System Coastal Seabirds. Available for download here .
Technical Series No. 62 AEWA Conservation Guidelines No. 5 - Guidelines on Sustainable Harvest of Migratory Waterbirds (Revision 1). Available for download here .



CAPACITY
BUILDING



Grey Crowned-crane (*Balearica regulorum*) © Daniel Buron

Photo on page 25: Slaty Egret (*Egretta vinaceigula*) © Rebecca Field

Capacity Building activities for the period 2017-2018 focused on the Adriatic Flyway and the African region and details are provided in document AEWA/MOP 7.11.

Adriatic Flyway

In partnership with EuroNatur, a German-based NGO, which provided financial and logistical support, a training workshop was organised for the National Administrative and Technical Focal Points of the AEWA Parties from the Adriatic flyway (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and the non-Party range States Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece and Serbia. The event was held on 13-15 September 2016 in Samobor, Croatia, with the aim to enhance cooperation and implementation of AEWA for countries situated along the Adriatic Flyway. In the absence of dedicated capacity-building personnel at the Secretariat, this work was undertaken by the Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit.

Africa

Through a voluntary contribution from the Government of Sweden, support was provided towards the International Waterbird Census (IWC) in seven high priority African Parties along the West Asian/East African Flyway over the period 2016 - 2017 (Burundi, Chad, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania).

The implementation of the 2015 AEWA Small Grants Fund (SGF) cycle was completed in April 2017 due to the AEWA MOP6 (November 2015)

which resulted in limited time allocation for the running of the SGF programme. This resulted in four projects funded from Kenya, Mauritania, Nigeria and Zimbabwe, all of which are currently on-going and have strong capacity building components, including on enhancing technical and material capacity for identification, survey and monitoring of waterbirds and their sites, for various target groups including local community volunteers, park rangers, government authorities and site management authorities. The on-going 2014 AEWA SGF project in Cote d'Ivoire also contributes to enhancing national capacity for waterbird identification and site management among key relevant stakeholders.

Meanwhile, four SGF projects from past SGF cycles were successfully completed during this period (in Gabon, Guinea, Togo and Morocco), equally contributed to enhancing capacity of various stakeholders in various waterbird-related topics. Details on these projects are provided in Doc. AEWA/MOP 7.11, on the implementation of the AEWA African Initiative and AEWA Plan of Action for Africa.

Also, through financial support from the Government of Switzerland through FOEN, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in collaboration with the Government of Eswatini, organised the African preparatory meeting for the AEWA MOP7 (Pre-MOP7) in Ezulwini, Eswatini in September 2018. In addition to familiarising the AEWA African National Focal Points in advance with key documents and issues to be discussed at the AEWA MOP7 and permitting them to deliberate on regional positions to be defended at the MOP, the Pre-MOP7 meeting also contributed to enhancing the knowledge



and skills of AEWA National Focal Points from 24 African Contracting Parties in preparing for and negotiating at AEWA meetings and other MEA meetings, using the CMS Family NFP Manual the key training tool: <https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/african-pre-mop-sets-pace-aewa-summit>.

AEWA Small Grants Fund Projects © pixabay.com

COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & OUTREACH



Joint CMS/AEWA Communications Unit

Through Resolution 6.22, the Meeting of the Parties requested the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats to develop a proposal, detailing implementation arrangements for the joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising Unit (IMCA Unit) including staff time and budget sharing ratios, management structure, monitoring and evaluation indicators, among others, to be approved by the Standing Committee.

The proposal for the IMCA Unit, was approved by the members of the Standing Committee on 24 October 2016. A separate report on the Joint CMS and AEWA Communication Unit is provided by the Standing Committee in document AEWA/MOP7.6. Four recommendations are made for consideration at MOP7.

Communication Activities

AEWA-related communication activities conducted between September 2015 and September 2018 are provided in detail in document AEWA/MOP7.13.

Some Highlights Include:

- Website News Production: In total, 153 website news articles have been featured on the AEWA website since September 2015.
- AEWA on Social Media: The number of AEWA Facebook page fans grew to 1,527 in September 2018, while the number of twitter followers grew to a total of 1,228 followers.
- AEWA Website Improvements: In the course

of this Triennium, a number of improvements have been made on the AEWA website www.unep-aewa.org

- Thematic Pages for the AEWA Website: Special web presentations around key topics such as 1.) Climate Change 2.) Lead Poisoning and 3.) Renewable Energy have been developed or are currently under development (see <https://www.unep-aewa.org/en/topics/lead-poisoning>).
- World Migratory Bird Day 2018: **“Unifying Our Voices for Bird Conservation”** is the theme of this year’s World Migratory Bird Day 2018. At the time of writing (September 2018), the WMBD website already registered over 656 unique WMBD events in over 70 countries. Activity on social media (#WorldMigratoryBirdDay) has reached more than 12 million impressions on 12 May alone and was used in more than 850 unique posts.
- The year 2018 marks the first year in which a unified global campaign under the single name of “World Migratory Bird Day” is being promoted globally – unifying the former International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) celebrated in the Americas and the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) launched by CMS and AEWA in 2006.

World Migratory Bird Day © UNEP/AEWA Secretariat

Photo on the left: Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*) © Torsten Pröhl

1,527
Facebook and
1,228 Twitter
followers as of
September 2018



153 news
articles featured on
the AEWA website
since September
2015

Cover Photo: African Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*) © Sylvain Cordier

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