



## 10<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

8-10 July 2015, Kampala, Uganda

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### Report on the activities of the Europe Central Asia Region of the AEWA since the last Standing Committee

10<sup>th</sup> Standing Committee Kampala, 8-10 July 2015

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This report provides an update of the activities undertaken in the Europe and Central Asia region of the AEWA since the last AEWA Standing Committee in Trondheim, Norway, in September 2013, in particular as regard the adhesion of new range States, the implementation of the agreement, activities related to the agreement and any other relevant issues. *(The information below summarised reports provided by a selection of countries only. Not all the countries of the region have reported.)*

#### 1) update, where appropriate, of the contact details/of the AEWA National Focal Point (NFP)

##### **Belgium:**

Michiel Vandegehuchte, Policy Advisor Species, replaced Sarah Roggeman as of June 12<sup>th</sup> 2014 as NFP. His contacts details are:

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##### **France:**

Marianne Courouble was replaced by François Lamarque, European and International Actions Officer, as of June 1<sup>st</sup> 2014 both as NFP and for representing Europe and Central Asia at the standing Committee. His contacts details are:

François Lamarque  
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##### **Switzerland:**

Olivier BIBER, retired, has been replaced by Sabine Herzog, Deputy head of section Wildlife & Forest Biodiversity within the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energie and communication DETEC Federal Office of the Environment FOEN Species, Ecosystems, Landscape Division. Her contact details are:

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## **2) any activities undertaken since the 9th Standing Committee to promote accession to the AEWA in your country**

## **3) developments regarding the implementation of the AEWA since the 9th Standing Committee**

### ***Belgium:***

See National Report from Belgium submitted for AEWA MOP 6, chapter 9 "Implementation":

- Site twinning schemes with other countries have been concluded, the sites of which share common migratory waterbirds or conservation issues (Resolution 5.20):
- Twinning of sites near the Zwin Tidal Area in the ZTAR project and REECZ project: nature restoration and recreation/ecotourism.
- The Hedwige-Prosper project across the Dutch/Belgian border in the Scheldt Estuary: restoring waterbird habitat.
- Dune restoration in Flanders and North France via Life project FLANDRE.
- Collaboration with the Netherlands and Germany in the tri-country Park: broad collaboration including landscape management.

### ***Estonia:***

The AEWA Workshop for the development of an International Single Species Action Plan for the Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*), which took place on 23-25 April 2014 in Roosta, Estonia.

In 2014, the autumn migration of waterbirds (Anseriformes, Charadriiformes, Gaviiformes, Podicipediformes, Pelecaniformes) was monitored at Cape Põõsaspea, NW Estonia, the top-important bottleneck site for migrating seaducks and other waterbirds in Baltic (Links to the article and to the Annex with results: [http://www.eoy.ee/hirundo/file\\_download/399/Eltermaa.Linden.2015-1.pdf](http://www.eoy.ee/hirundo/file_download/399/Eltermaa.Linden.2015-1.pdf), [http://www.eoy.ee/hirundo/file\\_download/403/Eltermaa.Linden.lisa.pdf](http://www.eoy.ee/hirundo/file_download/403/Eltermaa.Linden.lisa.pdf)).

The similar surveys in 2004 and 2009 gave an important evidence for adding the Long-tailed Duck and the Velvet Scoter to the IUCN Red List in 2012, and correspondingly cause amendments to the Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan as aforementioned species will be included to the Column A of the Table I in MOP6.

### ***France:***

1) Implementation of the African Initiative: Following the decisions taken at MOP5 in May 2012 in La Rochelle, and in compliance with Resolution 5.9, the government of France has provided funding in 2013, 2014 and 2015 to support the functioning of the Technical Support Unit (TSU) aiming at technically assist the African Parties to implement the Plan of Action for Africa adopted at MOP5.

The TSU is based in Tour du Valat with an African antenna in Dakar kindly hosted by the National Directorate for National Parks (DPNS) under a MoU signed between the DPNS and the French Ministry of Ecology (MEDDE). The French team is made of two ONCFS engineers, one GIS/database specialist and one project leader for the IWC in the Mediterranean (DIOE), both from Tour du Valat and an administrative officer based at the Ministry in charge of Ecology who, eventually, carry out technical missions. The Senegalese team is made of a technical coordinator (full time), an ornithologist and a support staff (part time).

The TSU attended the second sub-regional workshop for Eastern and Southern Africa held in Cape Town, South Africa, in October 2013, and organised the third sub-regional workshop for West and central Africa in Dakar, Senegal, in December 2013. Like the first sub-regional workshop for North Africa also organised by the TSU in El Kala, Algeria, in June 2013,, these two meetings aimed at prioritising the activities of the Plan of Action for Africa for the sub-regions. The eastern and southern sub-region as well as the West and central Africa sub-region chose the development of management plans for wetlands and the identification of key sites for migratory waterbirds as another priority.

To meet the priority regarding the improvement of the quality and quantity of data on waterbirds, the TSU has carried out several activities in the training and expertise fields:

- realisation of the IWC project in the Mediterranean (DIOE): through financial support of the MAVVA foundation and the French government, the projet to improve waterbirds monitoring and census and develop regional synergies was pursued for the third year in 2014 and fitted fully with the objective of the Action Plan for Africa chosen by the sub-region, i.e. the improvement of the quality and quantity of data on waterbirds. The following activities have been carried out in that framework: (i) technical support for the IWC provided to Tunisia in January 2014 so as to improve the counting protocol for Tunisian wetlands particularly large and difficult to monitor; (ii) analyse of the data of the 2013 IWC coordinated at the regional level; (iii) update and checking of the IWC databases of the Maghreb countries; (iv) organisation by Tour du Valat and ONCFS of a workshop gathering all the stakeholders of IWC in Northern Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt) in Tunis (November 2014) for validating the IWC data and strengthening the momentum of the IWC in that region; (v) supply of an adapted data base management system proposed to the North African countries by Tour du Valat; (vi) design and issue of an e-newsletter with papers from 10 mediterranean countries.
- realisation of the SPOVAN project, managed by ONCFS, with financial support of the French Ministry of Ecology; this project started five years ago to improve knowledge and local monitoring capacities on waterbird population in the Nile Valley (Egypt, Sudan and South Sudan) and is currently at its end. Several training sessions were organised in Sudan and France (Tour du Valat) for the field expert of the region in charge of the monitoring in 2013. The training sessions have all been carried out in the fields during the Midwinter period. This allowed collecting data fin the framework of the IWC programme coordinated by Wetlands International. Coordinators have also been trained in the field of data management and analysis.
- realisation of a training session on waterbirds in the curriculum of the Certificate in Local Governance for African Wetlands of the University of Ouagadougou in June 2014;
- organisation of a technical workshop for West and Central Africa to improve quality and quantity of the data of the International Waterbirds Census in Dakar, Senegal, in December 2014;
- realisation of two missions (Cameroun, June 2014 – Kenya and Tanzania, February 2015) to launch a collaboration on waterbirds and wetlands management between the three regional training centres on Wildlife: Wildlife Garoua School, (EFG, Garoua, Cameroun), Kenya Wildlife Service Training Institute (KWSTI, Naivasha, Kenya) and College of African Wildlife Management (CAWM, Mweka, Tanzania). A first MoU defining this collaboration was drafted in May 2015 during the Naivasha workshop (see below). The design of a module on waterbirds and wetlands management which will be shared by the three regional centers will be the first activity developed in that framework through a mission of the TSU to Mweka in July 2015;

The TSU dealt the priority on the development of management plans for migratory waterbird key-sites through the organisation of the Sub-regional Workshop on Wetlands Management Plans aiming the wetlands managers of the parties to AEWA in eastern and southern Africa. This workshop which was held in Naivasha the KWSTI campus from May 25th to 29th 2015, gathered 10 out of 11 parties of the great sub-region and was deemed successful by all the participants.

At last, the TSU developed a project called “RESSOURCE” which aims at developing a set of pilot projects in Burkina Faso, Egypt, Mali, Senegal, Sudan, Chad (alternative option: Ethiopia, Cameroon, Mauritania, Niger, South Sudan) to assess the extent and impact of migratory waterbirds exploitation in sites selected among wetlands of international importance and to define management methods of waterbirds and wetlands to ensure long term sustainability of this exploitation. These activities were identified as top priority in the AEWA Action plan for Africa. The ultimate goal is to identify and begin to implement innovative and rational management options or, where appropriate, to improve/validate existing management methods and make them available to local communities and managers. This project has been submitted for funding to FAO and FEM which have agreed it. It should be initiated in the very beginning of 2016.

2) Translation into portuguese of the Cd-Rom: “Training for monitoring of waterbirds’ populations in subsaharan Africa” realised by ONCFS. This Cd-Rom is now quadrilingual: French, English, Arabic, Portuguese and thus covers the idioms of all the African countries except Equatorial Guinea.

3) Technical cooperation with Russia, Belarus, Lithuania and Lettonia: Through financial support to the NGO, OMPO, France carried on the development of the three year project (2012-2014) aiming at improving knowledge on the conservation status of anatidae and turdidae. In 2014, the project implemented two main activities : (i) Assessment of the current status and of the evolution of breeding populations of 5 species of Turdidae (4 thrushes and blackbird) in Russia (Saint Petersburg and Karelia regions) and Lithuania. The reproductive success has been assessed through the monitoring of the age-ratio of the birds caught or hunted in Southern Europe; (ii) study of the demographic status and reproductive success of 6 species of Anatidae in selected sites of Latvia, Lithuania, en Belarus and Russia. This study allowed also to identify several measures for maintaining on the long term ducks populations able to bear a sustainable use.

5) Eradication of Ruddy ducks: The second national plan (2015-2019) to eradicate Ruddy duck in France implemented by ONCFS is on going under the supervision of Ministry of Ecology. More than 1,500 birds have been killed since the inception of the first plan in 1997. A national monitoring of wintering and breeding birds has been set up. A census of captive birds has been carried out.

6) Launching of an international management plan for the Greylag Goose. The French Minister of Ecology fostered the launching of a Management Plan for the Greylag Goose under the AEWA. This proposal was presented at the Technical Committee in March 2015 in Bonn which approved it but recommended that the management Plan be extended to other Geese species.

### ***The Netherlands:***

#### 1) Twinning.

The twinning arrangement signed during the 12<sup>th</sup> Trilateral Governmental Conference from 4-6 February 2014 in Tønder, Denmark, provides a framework for cooperation with a work package that will include support toward the designation of Banc d'Arguin National Park as a Particular Sensitive Sea Area (PSSA) under the International Maritime Organization regulation – a status that was obtained by the Wadden Sea in 2002. The agreement will facilitate considerably the exchange of capacity and expertise on bird monitoring and is unprecedented in the World Heritage marine network. Preparations for the twinning arrangements started in March 2013 with an exploratory meeting in Banc d'Arguin National Park that allowed both parties to understand the opportunities for a fruitful cooperation.

#### 2) Management of wetlands.

In the project “Rust voor Vogels, Ruimte voor Mensen” (Peace for birds, space for people), Birdlife Netherlands, along with other nature- and landscape organizations, will improve the conditions for breeding, resting and foraging birds in the Wadden Sea area for the next four years. On the other hand the project aims to let visitors enjoy the birds of the Wadden Sea more by bringing the nature experience closer. This is done by creating new bird watching areas, handing out free bird recognition cards, a free downloadable bird recognition app, educative posters, short animation movies, and creating new bike- and walking routes. The philosophy is that the more people enjoy birds and nature, the greater the support for conservation and restoration.

#### 3) Education and awareness:

A primary school curriculum about beach, sea, dunes, salt marches and mudflats is available and often implemented. Topics that are covered are the animals (among which waterbirds) inhabit these areas, how the foodweb works and why protection of these areas is important.

#### 4) International cooperation:

- Staatsbosbeheer (SBB, commissioned by the Dutch government and manages a sizeable amount of the nature reserves in the Netherlands) and Wetlands International started a cooperation in relation to the Nature Activity Centre 'Oostvaardersland' (NAC). The cooperation is aimed at presenting the Nature 2000 area Oostvaardersplassen as a crucial link in the migratory routes of many waterbirds. SBB and Wetlands International promote the Oostvaardersplassen within an international context, through activities which include the following: i) exposition in NAC (a.o. display of waterbirds flyways, short films); ii) website for visitors centre and iii) research and study facility in Visitors centre.
- Coordination, and support and special non-breeding water birds counts of tidal areas in West Africa as part of the Wadden Sea Flyway Initiative, funding through the Programme towards a Healthy Wadden Sea Ecosystem for man and nature.

#### 5) Eradication action towards invasive alien birds.

**Norway:**

Chairmanship of the Standing Committee.

Active support of one full time position within the Secretariat (Nina Mikander) to work mainly on Lesser White-fronted Goose ISSAP.

Active support to the Pink-footed Goose flyway management plan (including through financing).

**Switzerland:**

Switzerland revised the Ordonnance which protected the most important wintering places for waterbirds by 1.7.2015. It enlarged several sites, made some stricter protection rules in different sights and forbid feeding birds and non-military unmanned aerial vehicle (drones) in all the sites (about 0.4 % of Switzerland).

**4) overview of special activities and/or meetings related to the AEWA**

**Albania:**

Every year Albania has celebrated the World Migratory Bird Day by displaying posters and organizing awareness / promoting activities. This year on 8 May 2015 the activity was organized in Kune-Vain Protected Areas of Lezha district, with the participation of school students of Lezha. Representatives from the Ministry of Environment and the National Agency of Protected Areas delivered speeches on raising the awareness on migratory birds and the values of the wildlife and other migratory species.

**Belgium:**

See Belgium's report to AEWA MOP6. A selection of special activities and/or meetings:

- A Single Species Action Plan for the Corncrake is in development in the regions of Flanders and Wallonia
- Belgium took part in the AEWA International Working Group on the pink-footed goose. A Flemish working group met in September 2014 and Belgium was represented at the meeting of the International Working Group in the Netherlands in autumn 2014.
- A cooperation agreement is being developed to ensure an efficient implementation of the Invasive Alien Species legislation taking into account the responsibilities of the different authorities. This agreement also installs a formal contact group with the aim of providing a scientific background to political decisions and the administrative and political aspects in order to prepare Belgian positions for international meetings, elaborating programs related to Belgian international obligations and providing adequate feedback from the international decision making scene to the scientific community. It will be proposed for approval at the end of 2015. Belgium also actively participates in the European scientific forum, committee and working group on invasive alien species.
- A control or eradication programme for *Oxyura jamaicensis* /Ruddy Duck and *Branta Canadensis* / Greater Canada Goose is developed and being implemented
- An adaptation of the Flemish database for waterbird monitoring is planned in the framework of an Integrated Life Project 2014. A fragment of the Technical Application Form: 'WATERBIRDS DATA SYSTEM The waterbirds data collection system is as a monitoring network for several bird species protected by the Birds Directive that is operational since several years. However it has a different approach not yet adapted to new monitoring systems. The existing legacy application needs to be updated and refactored.'
- In 2014, there was a birdwatching activity at Uitkerkse Polder and a press release on the reporting for the EU Birds Directive in the framework of World Migratory Bird Day.

**Norway:**

- hosted the last Standing Committee in Trondheim in 2013.
- participated in meetings on Pink-Footed Goose and Long-tailed Duck.

**5) any other relevant information.**

**Albania:**

In January 2014 a Law "Announcing a hunting moratorium in the Republic of Albania" was approved with the effective date March 2014. The moratorium extends over a period of two years i.e. until March 2016. Consequently, a favorable situation is created for wildlife and its development, including migratory wildlife. A growing number of AEWA species has been noticed in the lagoon habitats.

**France:**

1) The impact on the birds' populations of the two moratoria on the hunting of the Eurasian Curlew and the Black-tailed Godwit which are running up to July 30th 2018 will be monitored through the use of 8 indicators up to their end. This monitoring is implemented by a task force « Waders » made of various stakeholders : hunters (FNC, ANCGE), conservation NGO (LPO, FNE), public agencies (MNHN, ONCFS) and the Ministry of Ecology.

A national management plan (2015 - 2020) for the Black-Tailed Godwit has been approved and issued. It is carried out in several French regions in collaboration with Hunters' federations under the supervision of Regional Directorates for Environment.

A national management plan for the Eurasian Curlew is being drafted by ONCFS.

2) The AEWA Focal Point took several email contacts with the Mozambican Administration in charge of Biodiversity conventions (MICOA) so as to foster the adhesion of this country to the Agreement. Accompanied by the AEWA Executive secretary, he met the Minister of Environment of Mozambique in Quito during CMS CoP 11, for promoting this adhesion and considering the way forward. Unfortunately, due to the change of government, the visit to Mozambique in February 2015 agreed with the Minister had to be cancelled.

The AEWA Focal Point accompanied by the leader of the African antenna of the TSU and the coordinator of the African Initiative took advantage of a mission in Cameroun to promote the adhesion of this country to the AEWA beside the Prime Minister and the national authorities in charge of Wildlife.

**Norway:** Is interested in supporting future management plan for numerous goose species in Western Europe, together with other Parties. This has to be discussed at the MoP6 and after.

**Switzerland:**

Switzerland supported the International Workshop on the adhesion of the Russian Federation to the AEWA in Moscow in August 2013.

Switzerland supported the AEWA African Initiative with funding.

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