



PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET:

- as of September 2009 -

STRENGTHENING WATERBIRD AND WETLAND CONSERVATION CAPACITIES IN NORTH AFRICA (WETCAP)

Project developed by the Secretariat of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (UNEP/AEWA)

Introduction

Effective waterbird and habitat conservation in North Africa is of immense importance for the preservation of many waterbird species migrating between Europe and Africa each year. Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia hold a number of internationally significant wetlands which are essential as breeding, staging or wintering grounds for millions of migratory waterbirds. The WetCap project was initiated to improve the conservation status of these habitats and their waterbirds. Its activities are closely linked to the currently ongoing Wings over Wetlands UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyway Project (WOW)¹, which is an international wetland and waterbird initiative in the African-Eurasian region.

Launched in March 2009, the WetCap project is a 3-year project, which was developed under the umbrella of AEWA and in close cooperation with the Spanish BirdLife partner Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO/BirdLife). While the AEWA Secretariat is responsible for the overall management of the project, a regional coordinator, provided by SEO/ BirdLife, facilitates the project implementation and coordinates project activities. Technical support is provided by the project partners BirdLife International and Wetlands International together with local partner organizations. The project is sponsored by the Spanish development cooperation agency Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID).

Brief description of the project

Project countries: Algeria, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia
Duration: 36 months

The aim of the WetCap project is to support the implementation of the relevant Multilateral Environmental Agreements (AEWA, Ramsar Convention) in the five project countries by promoting the protection of waterbirds and wetlands and by building local professional capacity. Activities under the WetCap project aim for 1. strengthening the capacities for waterbird and wetland conservation of all important stakeholders in the region (**Component 1**), 2. building knowledge and providing better access to information on the critical network of sites required by migratory waterbirds (**Component 2**), and 3. supporting local waterbird and wetland conservation projects (**Component 3**). Tied up to the ongoing UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project “Wings over Wetlands” (WOW) this project significantly contributes to the success of WOW in North Africa through the implementation of complementary and “follow-up” activities especially designed for this region.

¹ The WOW flyway project aims at establishing a basis for strengthening decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation. For more information on WOW please visit <http://www.wingsoverwetlands.org>



Component 1: Capacity building – training and awareness-raising

Activity provided under the WOW project:

a) **Development of a framework Programme for Training and Awareness Raising; Adaptation of the Programme to neighbour regions of North Africa (e.g. West Africa, Middle East)**

Stakeholders involved in the conservation of wetlands and migratory waterbirds must have a common level of understanding of key issues and practices in order to be able to communicate effectively with one another across the flyway. For this purpose a transferable framework for training and awareness raising programmes is being produced under WOW, which provides a generic structure and content designed to strengthen capacity for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and wetlands. The model is being designed to ensure that sub-regional stakeholder agencies are integrally involved in the development of corresponding programmes. The training and awareness raising programmes are made available for adaptation and implementation across the AEWA region. *The development of an adapted Programme for North Africa, however, is not foreseen under WOW, neither is the implementation of such adapted programmes.* This gap will be filled by WetCap.

Activities provided under the WetCap project:

b) **Adaptation of the framework Programme for Training and Awareness Raising to North Africa**

- **Training Board meeting:**

1-day meeting of selected experts from each country aiming at 1) reviewing the framework modules and already adapted programmes (e.g. Middle East, West Africa), and elaborating a programme for North Africa; 2) establishing a Training Board, which will proceed with the tasks related to the adaptation of the training programme as identified by the meeting.

Participants to this meeting and members of the Training Board should be professionals/ managers representing national NGOs and/ or training institutions and having the capacity to follow up the meeting and adapt the training and awareness raising programme to the region of North Africa.

- **Regional and national adaptation process:**

The members of the Training Board will follow up the adaptation meeting and complement the training modules with region and / or country-specific material (e.g. case studies, maps).

c) **Implementation of the Training and Awareness Raising Programme in North Africa**

- **Regional Training of trainers workshop:**

Key persons from the governments, national NGOs and other institutions will be enabled to transfer the gained knowledge into their countries through national workshops organised under this project. The proposed modules are: 1) Understanding the flyway approach²; 2) Applying the flyway approach³; 3) Communicating the flyway approach⁴.

² That implies generic introduction to bird migration, understanding the key factors influencing the population dynamics of migratory waterbirds, monitoring as an early warning system and the roles of the International Waterbird Census (IWC) and Important Bird Areas (IBA) monitoring etc.



- **National training:**
2 training workshops in each country, undertaken by the trained trainers, will be targeted both at existing practitioners whose skills need to be improved and at those with currently very limited or no skills.
- **Translation of key MEA documents into Arabic.**⁵

Component 2: Increasing knowledge on waterbirds and wetlands

Activity provided under the WOW project:

a) Development of a Critical Site Network tool (CSN tool)

One of the most innovative activities under WOW is the creation of the Critical Site Network tool, combining currently dispersed data found in the *International Waterbird Census*, *Important Bird Areas Database*, the *Ramsar Sites Information Service* and the *World Database on Protected Areas* in a central information portal on waterbird species, their migratory routes, key wetland areas and ecological sites. The CSN tool will help all stakeholders involved in the transboundary conservation of waterbirds to target their efforts in fulfilling their obligations under relevant international treaties, i.e. including the Ramsar Convention and AEWA. Thus the tool will, for example, help identify potential Ramsar sites, provide information for environmental impact assessments, help identify gaps of knowledge on wetlands and waterbirds and assist in the development of International Single Species Action Plans.

Activities provided under the WetCap project:

b) Regional CSN tool workshop:

3-day workshop for representatives from all countries, aiming at reviewing data of the CSN tool and identifying key sites and gaps.

Participants to this workshop will be experts working in the field of site designation/ conservation and having the relevant technical know-how, capacity and institutional mandate in their country to follow up the workshop and implement the knowledge gained through the workshop on the national level.

c) 4 gap-filling surveys in each country; selected by the WetCap Steering Committee and based on the results and recommendations of the workshop. The surveys will be undertaken by local authorities and organizations and in close coordination with the AEWA Secretariat, the regional coordinator and sub-contracted organizations.

d) Monitoring the status of 4 identified key sites per country, possibly integrated in an existing monitoring framework.

³ The module includes preparing and implementing species action plans, conservation measures, principals of wise-use of migratory waterbird population, setting up and maintaining waterbird population monitoring schemes, techniques for studying migration and relation between sites, collaboration between IGOs, NGOs, academic stakeholders and local communities, and using the Critical site tool (compare Component 2).

⁴ The module will help to understand the role of communication and advocacy in the flyway approach, to better address the role of stakeholders, and to use advocacy techniques more effectively.

⁵ Arabic is not an official language and therefore not provided under the MEAs.



Component 3: Local projects on waterbird and wetland management and monitoring

This component will directly benefit two community projects in each country that focus on waterbird and wetland conservation, e.g. supporting wetland/ habitat restoration or local ecotourism. Eligible projects could, for example, concentrate on the training of local wetland site wardens, bird guides or national park staff. Ideally such projects would at the same time contribute to the implementation of AEWA single species action plans.

The call for project proposals is planned to be published end of 2009.

WetCap Steering Committee

The Project Steering Committee comprises representatives of AEWA, BirdLife International, BirdLife/SEO, Wetlands International, the Ramsar Convention/MedWet and the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID). The role of the Steering Committee is to guide and oversee the project's technical progress and performance.

WetCap contacts

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Time schedule

Activities	Details
Year 1	
Steering Committee meeting	25 August 2009
Component 1	
1-day Training Board meeting to adapt the WOW training and awareness raising programme to the region; aims: review training modules; establish a Training Board	January 2010, Morocco (tentative)
Regional and national adaptation of framework training and awareness raising programme by the Training Board	Following the 1-day TB meeting
Translation of key MEA documents	Ongoing
Component 2	
3-day regional CSN tool workshop: Review of data obtained through CSN tool and identification of gaps	Nov/ Dec 2009, Morocco (tentative)
Selection of field survey missions in each country	Recommendation of the workshop; final selection by Steering Committee
Component 3	
Call for project proposals	End of 2009
Coordination and Information management	
Development of a project website and other information material (e.g. an informative brochure)	Ongoing
Recruitment of a regional coordinator	On duty since July 2009
Year 2	
Steering Committee meeting	February 2010
Component 1	
Implementation of the training and awareness raising programme – phase 1: Regional training of trainers workshop	2010
Component 2	
2 surveys in each country	2010/ 2011
2 monitoring field missions in each country	2010/ 2011
Component 3	
Selection and implementation of funded local projects	Selection: Feb 2010; Implementation start: appr. Jul 2010
Information management	
Website, development of leaflets, e-news etc.	Ongoing
Year 3	
Steering Committee meeting	2011/ 2012
Component 1	
Implementation of the training and awareness raising programme – phase 2: National training in each country	2011/ 2012
Component 2	
2 surveys in each country	2011/ 2012
2 monitoring field missions in each country	2011/ 2012
Component 3	
Implementation of local projects	2011/ 2012
Information management	
Website, development of leaflets, e-news etc.	Ongoing