



9th MEETING OF THE AEWA STANDING COMMITTEE
18 – 19 September 2013, Trondheim, Norway

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION OF THE
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

Compiled by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat

Introduction

The present document:

- I. Describes the plans for the envisaged revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy; and
- II. Provides a brief update on a number of key ongoing communication-related activities being implemented by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat since MOP5 (May 2012, La Rochelle, France).

Among several important communication-related decisions, Resolution 5.5 on the “*Implementation and Revision of the Communication Strategy*” adopted by MOP5 provides a mandate to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to carry out a full revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy for adoption at the 6th Session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (MOP6) in 2015.

The revision process represents a unique opportunity to re-align and adjust the Agreement’s existing Communication Strategy to become a more practical and useful tool to support the implementation of AEWA, especially with regard to the implementation of Article III of the Agreement and chapter 6 of the Action Plan as well as the achievement of objective 4 and associated targets of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017.

Subject to available resources, it is foreseen that the revised Strategy will be presented for consideration and adoption to MOP6.

I. Revision Process for the AEWA Communication Strategy

With the adoption of Resolution 5.5, AEWA Contracting Parties initiated a revision process for the existing Communication Strategy which was originally adopted through Resolution 3.10 by MOP3 in 2005. With this decision, AEWA Contracting Parties have clearly recognized the need for an update of the existing Strategy through a revision process which should result in a more realistic, up-to-date and practical Communication Strategy for the Agreement.

Resolution 5.5 instructs the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to prepare the revision for adoption by MOP6 and to base it on a wide consultation process involving Contracting Parties, Range States, the Technical Committee, partners as well as Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) experts.

Furthermore, Resolution 5.5 states that the revision process should also take into account CMS COP Resolution 10.9 on the “*Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS Family*” and the activities and developments initiated by it.

Independent Expert to Conduct the Revision Process

As previously expressed in Document AEWA/MOP 5.18, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat believes that such an extensive revision process should be led by an independent expert consultant and should closely involve

the Agreement Secretariat, the Technical Committee (TC), the Standing Committee (StC) and the newly-nominated National CEPA Focal Points from across the Agreement Area.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat also believes that in order to be successful, such an extensive revision process would need to be adequately funded and actively supported by Parties and the Agreement's other stakeholders. As requested by Resolution 5.5, the recently-established AEWA Technical Committee CEPA Working Group 5 and the appointed Technical Committee CEPA Expert also need to be actively involved in, and help guide the revision process.

Scope of the Proposed Revision Process

As described in detail in Document AEWA/MOP 5.18, the revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy should consist of a thorough desk analysis of relevant key documents as well as a comprehensive consultation process with key actors. Draft versions of the revised Strategy will have to be presented to the next Technical Committee and Standing Committee meetings prior to a near final version being presented to MOP6.

The revision should also try to take into account current political and economic realities, capacity and the true financial resources available both at the national and international level to carry out identified communication, education and training activities. One of the shortfalls of the existing strategy was that it was overly ambitious with a Communication Action Plan which had an unrealistic set of activities for which only a very limited amount of funding was made available. Hence, the new strategy should help raise the importance of CEPA in the AEWA context and help address the challenge represented so far by the lack of resources for communication activities related to the implementation of AEWA both on the national and international level.

A number of key documents and developments which have occurred since the adoption of the original Communication Strategy in 2005 need to be considered and taken into account in the revision process.

These include, but are not limited to:

- AEWA Agreement Text and Action Plan
- AEWA Communication Strategy and Communication Action Plan (Version adopted by MOP3)
- AEWA Strategic Plan 2009 – 2017
- AEWA Plan of Action for Africa
- Relevant Resolutions, in particular AEWA Resolutions 3.1, 5.4, 5.5 and CMS COP Resolution 10.9
- Relevant AEWA and CMS Meeting Documents and Reports (including but not limited to: AEWA/MOP 5.18, AEWA/MOP 5.19, AEWA/MOP 5.10, CMS/StC 41.14, CMS/StC 41.16 and CMS/StC 41.17 and others)
- World Migratory Bird Day Campaigns 2006 – 2013
- Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project 2006 - 2010
- AEWA International Single Species Action Plans & Potential International SSAP Working Group CEPA Activities
- Existing CEPA-related resources of other MEAs (including but not limited to the CEPA Toolkit for CBD National Focal Points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and NBSAP Coordinators developed by the CBD Secretariat)

In addition, a number of suggestions to consider in the revision process were made by the AEWA Technical Committee at its 11th Meeting in August 2012 (TC11). The Technical Committee's CEPA Working Group 5, which was established through Resolution 5.5, convened for the first time during TC11, and the outcomes of the discussions were discussed in plenary.

Some of the main points raised at TC 11 in this discussion included:

- The present Communication Strategy lacks strategic advocacy work as well as an educational approach;
- The goal of the new strategy should be clear;
- A renewed strategy should also include a more pro-active awareness-raising approach, for example encouraging Parties to implement AEWA Conservation Guidelines;
- The revised Strategy could take elements from the old, but can also take a more proactive approach;
- The new strategy should encourage more communication between MEAs;

The revision should also include provisions for the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the Communication Strategy, including through an adjustment of the AEWA National Report Format to improve the monitoring of the implementation of the Strategy at the national level. The revised AEWA National Reporting Format should also become a means of sharing CEPA-related information, knowledge and experiences amongst AEWA Parties.

Last but not least, the revision should also look closely at other existing international CEPA programmes and Communication Strategies being implemented in the frameworks of other Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs). In other words, the revision should not take place in isolation, but should build on and create linkages to what other MEAs, particularly the biodiversity-related ones, are doing with respect to establishing and implementing their individual CEPA activities and programmes.

Timeline

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat proposes the following steps and timeline to complete the revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy by MOP6 in 2015:

- Standing Committee (StC 9) endorses the Secretariat's plans for the Communication Strategy Revision Process (September 2013);
- Secretariat to secure funding for the Independent Communication Consultant & Communication Strategy Revision Workshop (Funds to be secured by December 2013);
- The Secretariat finalizes the Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Communication Consultant to Conduct the Revision Process (December 2013) and conducts an international tender to hire the Consultant (January – February 2014);
- Consultant Desk Study – Review of Key Documents and Communication Activities (February - March 2014);
- Consultant Consultative Process – Interviews with Key Stakeholders / Targeted Surveys (April - May 2014)
- Preparation of a draft revised version of the Communication Strategy by the Consultant. Funding permitting, this might include the convening of a Communication Strategy Revision Workshop (June - September 2014)
- Presentation of the draft revised Communication Strategy to the AEWA Technical Committee at its 12th Meeting (TC 12) for review and input (October 2014)
- Presentation and Consultation of a new draft of the revised Communication Strategy at the 10th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee (Tbd – Early 2015)
- Preparation of final Draft for presentation of the revised Communication Strategy to MOP6 (April 2015)

Required Funding

An estimated amount of €12,000 - 24,000 will be required to allow the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to hire the Independent Expert Consultant to conduct the review process and to prepare the revised Communication Strategy for adoption at MOP6. The Consultant contract would be for 8 - 12 months and will cover both

coordination of the revision process (incl. the desk study, interviews and surveys), the drafting of the actual document and workshop facilitation.

Depending on the chosen venue and host, a consultative Communication Strategy Revision Workshop would cost approximately €35,000 – 40,000, which would allow the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to bring together the key relevant stakeholders from across the Agreement area. Participants of the workshop should include: StC and TC Chairs, selection of nominated National CEPA Focal Points, selection of Technical Committee CEPA Working Group Members, TC CEPA Expert, and Communication Officers from key AEWA Partners as well as other relevant stakeholders. Provided funding can be secured and no earlier date and venue can be found, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would propose to consider holding the workshop back-to-back with TC12, tentatively scheduled to take place in October 2014.

II. Update on Ongoing Communication Activities (limited to activities directly relating to the implementation of Resolution 5.5)

Below is a summary of some of the key communication-related activities and developments, which have taken place and/or have been carried out by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat since MOP5 in May 2012. The activities included here represent those activities which the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat feels are the most relevant and important activities to report on to the 9th Meeting of the Standing Committee. Please note that many day-to-day communication activities such as the maintenance of the AEWA website, production of the AEWA E-Newsletter and print publications developed since MOP5 are not included in this summary.

Nomination of National CEPA Focal Points

Resolution 5.5 invites Contracting Parties to nominate a suitable AEWA National Focal Point for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA). The task of the CEPA Focal Point is to coordinate both national and regional implementation of the AEWA Communication Strategy, as well as contribute to its revision process.

By the original deadline set by Resolution 5.5 (31 December 2012), the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat received nominations from four Contracting Parties, namely Benin, Germany, Togo and Zimbabwe. After several reminders were sent to Contracting Parties by the Secretariat, the number of CEPA Focal Point nominations has meanwhile grown to 17. As of June 2013 the following countries had submitted National CEPA Focal Point nominations to the Secretariat: Algeria, Benin, Chad, Germany, Madagascar, Monaco, the Netherlands, Niger, Romania, South Africa, Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Uganda, the United Kingdom, Ukraine and Zimbabwe. Most of the CEPA Focal Point nominations received by the Secretariat to date are from the African region, which is contributing to the implementation of one of the outputs of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa (PoAA Result 4.3.1).

Three of the seventeen CEPA nominations received to date are clearly from non-governmental organizations and at least two AEWA CEPA Focal Points are also registered as Ramsar CEPA Focal Points. An up-to-date AEWA CEPA Focal Point List is being maintained by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, with the latest available version posted on the AEWA Website: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/activities/cepa/>

A draft document (Doc. StC 9.15) outlining the expected roles and responsibilities for National CEPA Focal Points is presented to the 9th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee for input and endorsement.

While continuing to solicit Contracting Parties to nominate their National CEPA Focal Points, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat considers that the network of CEPA Focal Points has now reached the critical mass for the initiation of activities including the organization of the first set of AEWA CEPA Workshops, possibly linked to the Communication Strategy Revision Process.

CEPA Expert and Working Group in the Technical Committee

As requested by Resolution 5.5, an expert Working Group on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) within the AEWA Technical Committee was established at the 11th Meeting of the

Technical Committee (TC 11) which took place from 27 to 30 August 2012 in Accra, Ghana. The main tasks of the TC's CEPA Working Group is to provide advice and prioritization on the ongoing implementation of the Communication Strategy and to guide and give input to the revision process of the Strategy.

A designated CEPA Expert in the Technical Committee has unfortunately not been identified yet, mainly due to lack of proposed candidates. However, participants of TC11 clearly expressed that the proposed CEPA Expert for the Technical Committee should be more in a position to give communication management advice, rather than a purely technical expert. Once nominated, the CEPA Expert is expected to support both the ongoing implementation and the revision process for the Communication Strategy. In addition, it is also expected that both the CEPA Expert and the CEPA Working Group will be able to provide general communication advice and expertise to the Technical Committee and the Secretariat on issues related to the most appropriate communication medium and presentation of reports and guidelines commissioned by the Secretariat on behalf of the TC. Last but not least, the CEPA Working Group and Expert are also expected to provide input to the adjustment of the communication-related questions of the next AEWANA National Reporting Format.

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2013

On 11-12 May 2013, over 350 separate awareness-raising events were held in 88 countries to mark World Migratory Bird Day 2013.

The theme for 2013 was "Networking for migratory birds" highlighting the importance of ecological networks as well as networks between governments, organizations and people for the survival of migratory birds. As in previous years, World Migratory Bird Day 2013 broke all records when it came to public outreach and number of registered events and countries. Of those known to have taken place (i.e. those registered on the WMBD website), WMBD events took place in 37 AEWANA Contracting Parties and a further 18 in AEWANA Range States.

Amongst the highlights for 2013, was a major regional World Migratory Bird Day celebration near Lake Elementaita, Kenya organized by the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and attended by CMS Ambassador Ms Kuki Gallmann. This event represents a key activity in the AEWANA Plan of Action for Africa (PoAA Result 4.3.2), which calls for the organisation of one major WMBD event in a different African sub-region each year. For more information about this successful event, please see: AEWANA Doc StC 9.10.

In addition, a special charity concert organized by the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWANA Secretariats for the benefit of the Grey-crowned Crane took place in Bonn and a record number of inspiring statements to mark WMBD 2013 were solicited by the UNEP/AEWANA Secretariat from global personalities such as, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner and others.

In line with Resolution 5.5, the UNEP/AEWANA Secretariat continued to play a central role in the organization of the campaign in 2013 in close cooperation with the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and with UNEP, BirdLife International, Wetlands International, the Partnership for the East Asian - Australasian Flyway (EAAFP) and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC) acting as the main global partners. The global 2013 World Migratory Bird Day campaign as well as the first Regional WMBD Celebration for the Eastern African Region was made possible through the kind voluntary contribution by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

AEWANA Single Species Working Group Websites

The UNEP/AEWANA Secretariat has worked closely with an external contractor to develop a total of eight AEWANA International Single Species Action Plan Working Group Websites. The new websites are modelled on the successful AEWANA Technical Committee Workspace, featuring internal workspaces to facilitate the work of the species working groups.

While the publicly accessible side of the websites functions as a platform to showcase the international conservation work being carried out by the different AEWANA International Species Working Groups, the

internal workspaces can be used for communication between the international group members in periods between face-to-face meetings.

Websites have been created for the: Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), the Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), the Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*), the Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*), the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*), the White-winged Flufftail (*Sarothrura ayresi*), the Madagascar Pondheron (*Ardeola idae*) and the Slaty Egret (*Egretta vinaceigula*).

The project was made possible through a generous voluntary contribution to AEWa from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

Flyways Training of Trainers Workshop (6-10 May 2013, Naivasha, Kenya)

A Regional Training of Trainers (ToT) workshop on the Flyway Approach to the Conservation and Wise Use of Waterbirds and Wetlands was organized by the UNEP/AEWa Secretariat in close cooperation with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in Naivasha, Kenya from 6-10 May 2013.

The workshop was organized by the UNEP/AEWa Secretariat in the framework of the AEWa African Initiative and included 19 selected participants from 13 Eastern and Southern African countries. Among the participants were two recently nominated National CEPA Focal Points from South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In line with Resolution 5.4 and Resolution 5.5 as well as Result 3.2.1 of the AEWa Plan of Action for Africa, the successful workshop made use of the Flyway Training Kit (FTK) developed under the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project. The highly interactive workshop was made possible through funding from the Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy (ENRTP) Strategic Cooperation Agreement between the European Commission - DG Environment and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). For more information about this successful event, please see: AEWa Doc StC 9.10.

Development of a Flyway Partnership Website

The UNEP/AEWa Secretariat has contracted a web developer to build a website to support the work of the Partnership for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats (Wings Over Wetlands). In line with Resolution 5.4, the aim of the Flyway Partnership Website is to promote the use of the main tools developed in the context of the WOW Project such as the Flyway Training Kit and Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool and to bring together centrally, information related to ongoing flyway conservation-related activities and training opportunities in the AEWa Region. The development of the website is made possible through a voluntary contribution from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU).

CMS Family-Related Communication Activities

The UNEP/AEWa Secretariat has been actively participating in and significantly contributing to a number of common information and communication related activities of the CMS Family. Below is a short summary of some of the main activities to which the UNEP/AEWa Secretariat has actively contributed to since MOP5. Most of the listed activities directly or indirectly relate to the implementation of CMS COP Resolution 10.9 on the "Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS and CMS Family".

CMS Family Database and Website Project

The UNEP/AEWa Secretariat actively participates in a special working group set up to steer the CMS Family Database and Website Project. The project is led by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and aims to bring together and improve the overall information management, interoperability and presentation of CMS Family data on the Web. First initiated by the AEWa Information Officer through a CMS Family World Café exercise in August 2011, the idea for a common Web portal for the CMS Family has meanwhile grown to become one of the key CMS Family projects relating to the implementation of CMS COP Resolution 10.9.

The project is made possible through funding from the CMS Trust Fund as well as from AEWA, EUROBATS, the CMS Sharks MoU, the CMS Abu Dhabi Project Office and voluntary contributions from Finland and Germany.

Development of Online Workspaces for CMS Family Scientific Advisory Bodies

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat actively participated in a project to technologically upgrade the successful AEWA Technical Committee workspace and to develop workspace duplicates for the CMS Scientific Council, and the EUROBATS and ASCOBANS Advisory Committees. These workspaces are now in use by the members of the scientific advisory bodies of the CMS Family and provide the different working groups with a web-based, password-protected communication space and working area. All workspaces are now being hosted on a single “CMS Family Server” and the cost of maintaining the sites is being shared evenly amongst participating CMS Family Instruments.

Online National Reporting System (ORS)

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been actively pushing for a further development and expansion of the CMS Family Online Reporting System since the system was used for the first time by AEWA Parties to report to MOP5. Meanwhile, the use of the system has expanded, with the CMS, ASCOBANS and CITES Secretariats now confirmed users of the ORS and with other MEAs such as the Ramsar Convention showing interest.

In February 2013, on behalf of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat, the AEWA Information Officer was requested to give a presentation to the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) on the topic of possibly expanding the CMS Family Online Reporting System to a wider group of MEAs. As a result, a joint letter from the BLG was sent to the Executive Director of UNEP to seek possible support from UNEP for fundraising for a further development of a common MEA reporting system. UNEP-WCMC as developers of the ORS have also been exploring multiple possibilities for funding such a common project and a sub-working group was formed within the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative (IKM) to ensure more coordinated approaches to the further development of and fundraising for a common MEA reporting system.

CMS Family-Related Meetings

The AEWA Information Officer and Information Assistant have been actively participating in a large number of internal CMS Family related meetings on a wide range of common communication related topics such as the above-mentioned website and workspaces projects, development of a CMS Family Style Guide, World Migratory Bird Day 2013, the development of a National Focal Point (NFP) Manual and the further development of the Online National Reporting System. UNEP/AEWA Secretariat staff also actively contributed to the CMS & AEWA NFP Manual Workshop and other meetings relating to the UNEP-ENRTP Project.

Furthermore, the AEWA Information Officer continues to act as the CMS Family Focal Point and Steering Committee Member for the UNEP Information and Knowledge Management Initiatives for MEAs Initiative (IKM).

Actions requested from the Standing Committee:

- a. Note the progress made, as reported in this document;
- b. Review and provide input and/or support to the proposed outline for the AEWA Communication Strategy Revision Process.