



9th MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

18 – 19 September 2013, Trondheim, Norway

Report on the Activities of the Europe and Central Asia Region of AEWA since the last Meeting of the Standing Committee

Submitted by Ms Marianne Courouble, AEWA National Focal Point for France, Member of the AEWA Standing Committee and Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia

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 La Rochelle in May 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 summarized 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

Czech Republic:

Jiri Pykal who is the National Focal Point for technical and expert questions of AEWA has become a member of Expert group of the Czech Ramsar Committee.

Sweden:

David Schönberg Alm is now AEWA National Focal Point, in replacement of Peter Orn. He will also represent Sweden in the Technical Committee.

His contact details:

E-mail: David.schonberg.alm@naturvardsverket.se
Swedish EPA (Environment Protection Agency)
Valhallavägen 195
106 48 Stockholm
+46-010-698-16-88

Switzerland:

Within the Federal Office of the Environment (FOEN), the Ministry in charge of AEWA, organisation changes are under way and therefore the new officers in charge of the AEWA have not been communicated yet to the Secretariat. This should be effective shortly.

European Commission:

Paulo Paixão, in charge of the AEWA at the European Commission, has changed position and has been replaced in its former fonctions by Minela Novakova, now following all CMS-family issues.

Her contact details are:

Milena Novakova,
European Commission Environment Directorate-General Unit ENV.E.1 – International Relations and
Enlargement
Office: BU-9 3/160
Avenue de Beaulieu, 5
1160 Bruxelles
Belgique
E-mail : milena.novakova@ec.europa.eu
Tel + 32 2 296 69 40

2) Any activities undertaken since the 8th Standing Committee to promote accession to the AEWA in your country

France:

The AEWA Focal Point, accompanied by the Director of OMPO, participated on 21st August in a technical meeting in Moscow to support the adhesion of Russia to the AEWA

Switzerland:

The Federal Office of the Environment participated to the Moscow meeting to support the adhesion of Russia to the AEWA.

3) Developments regarding the implementation of the AEWA since the 8th Standing Committee

Czech Republic:

The Ministry of the Environment supported preparation and edition of brochure: The bird of Nové Mlýny reservoirs. The brochure, that analyses the datas of long-term monitoring of Nove Mlyny water birds contributes to the implementation of the AEWA. Nove Mlyny are one of the most important birds areas within the Czech Republic, It is a Ramsar site as well.

The translation of the report of a 3 years study on wild geese disturbance by noise is currently being undertaken. The report will be sent to the AEWA Secretariat as soon as possible.

A project on conservation, research and wise use of wetlands of the Czech Republic is planned to start in 2014. The project includes also monitoring and evaluation of the status of water birds on the annexes of AEWA.

Estonia:

In 2012, a Nature Conservation Development Plan running until 2020 and prepared by the Ministry of the Environment was adopted by the Government of Estonia. Principles of conservation of migratory species are included in the Nature Conservation Development Plan.

In collaboration with the Environmental Board, a compilation of several national single species action plans to AEWA species is going on, e.g. Bewick's swan, Black-tailed godwit, Corncrake. In addition, the renewal of some action plans is taking place, including the Lesser white-fronted goose, the Black stork, the Common crane, the Ruff.

As result of change in hunting legislation (Hunting Act), the total ban (including wetlands) of lead shot in waterfowl hunting came into force in Estonia in 2013.

Finland:

The implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose and the implementation of the National Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose is effective in Finland.

The Ministry of the Environment has appointed a working group to develop EIA-methods when wind farms are planned on migration routes and near staging areas and to map migration routes.

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 to support the creation of the Technical support Unit to technically assist the African Parties to implement the Plan of Action for Africa adopted at MOP5. The Technical support Unit, based in Tour du Valat, and resulting from a cooperation of the ONCFS and Tour du Valat, was completed by the recruitment of two experts, one IGS specialist, and one ornithologist who is based in Dakar, Senegal.

The TSU, composed of 4 persons, and supported by the French Ministry of Ecology, has organised a first sub-regional workshop in El Kala, Algeria, in June 2013, on the African Initiative, aiming at prioritizing the activities of the Plan of Action for Africa for the Northern African region resulted in a commonly agreed programme for Northern Africa focusing on training and monitoring of migratory waterbirds.

The TSU is currently planning its active participation to the second Sub-regional meeting for Southern/eastern Africa due to take place in South Africa, end of October 2013, organised by the AEWA/CMS Secretariats. The TSU is also currently actively preparing the third workshop for West/central Africa, planned for December 2013 in Dakar.

An official Protocol of collaboration was signed in July 2013 between the Directorate of National Park of Senegal and the Directorate for Water and Biodiversity of the French Ministry of Ecology, setting mutual support to the African Initiative. The Government of Senegal has created a special Unit dedicated to the implementation of the African Initiative.

2) Launching of the first identification guide in Arabic for Northern Africa: With financial support of the French government and the MAVA foundation, a first field guide for the identification of migratory water birds was created and officially launched in Tunis in March 2013. The guide concerns waterbirds occurring in Northern Africa, down to Mauritania and Sudan. The official launching in Tunis was covered by many press articles and radio interviews.

3) IWC project in Mediterranean Bassin (DIOE): through financial support of the MAVA foundation and the French government, the project to improve waterbirds monitoring and census and develop regional synergies was pursued for the second year in 2013. Several training sessions were organised in Northern Africa. A "Mediterranean Waterbirds" network, bringing together different partners involved in the monitoring and the conservation of waterbirds and wetlands in the Mediterranean Region was created in 2012. The first edition of a "Mediterranean Waterbirds" Bulletin was issued in July 2013.

4) The SPOVAN project, managed by ONCFS, with financial support of the French Ministry of Ecology started three years ago to improve knowledge and local monitoring capacities on waterbird population in the Nile Valley (Egypt, North and South Sudan) is currently at its third phase. 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.

5) Technical cooperation with Russia, Belarus, Lithuania and Lettonia: Through financial support to the NGO, OMPO, France is developing a three year project (2012-2014) to improve knowledge on the conservation status of anatidae and turdidae, through in particular the development of a scientific network in Eastern Europe. The first results of the studies should be published in an atlas on the conservation status of Anatidae to be finalised in 2014.

6) Eradication of Ruddy ducks: The drafting of a national plan to eradicate the last specimens of Ruddy ducks in France has started in 2013 and training session for ONCFS field officers has been organised in May 2013.

7) At the request of the French Ministry of Ecology, the ONCFS has initiated a study programme one geese that should run until 2015.

Germany:

African Initiative: the Ministry of Environment Magazine "Umwelt" has published an articles on the outcomes of the AEWA MOP5, also highlighted the need to support water bird protection in Africa, in Accordance with the respective MOP resolution - 5.9.

In order to foster the implementation of this resolution, Germany has already taken the following steps:

- Three year financial support to the AEWA Secretariat for the position of "Programme assistant (J4 post).
- Launching and financial support (up to 2015) of a "Flyway cooperation project" for capacity building in Africa. The project is executed in a close cooperation with The Netherlands under the auspices of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat (CWSS) together with other African targeted flyway projects in the so called "Waddensea Flyway initiative".

The Government of Germany has also provided voluntary contribution in 2013 to the AEWA fo the following initiatives and projects:

- A revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy
- CMS Family Website Project

- Renewable Energy Technologies Deployment and Migratory Species
- Support to the European Sea duck Working Group (to analyze the reasons of species decline in the Baltic sea)
- The Wings over Wetlands Day

Hungary:

Changes in the legislation were undertaken on hunting concerning wildfowl as of 1 October 2012: the Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*) and the non-native Canada (*Branta canadensis*) and Egyptian Goose (*Alopochen aegyptiacus*) became game birds, while the Teal (*Anas crecca*) and Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*) became protected, leaving Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) as the only huntable duck species. Some other, minor modifications also took place concerning hunting seasons and daily bags.

A decision has been taken at ministerial level on elaborating a management plan for the Greylag Goose and the Mallard, and a joint species action plan for the Pochard (*Aythya ferina*) and the Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*).

Hungary participated in the LIFE10 NAT/GR/000638 LIFE+ project on the protection of the Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), and the drafting of the Hungarian action plan for the species.

The drafting of a national Species Action Plan for the Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*) has been initiated.

The monitoring of waterbirds has been pursued (synchronised counts once every month from August to April at the 48 most important wetlands).

Romania:

1) Scientific research and monitoring:

During the period 2012- 2013, scientific research and monitoring activities were done through implementing the projects co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund within the Sectoral Operational Programme Environment 2007-2013, priority axis 4-implementation of adequate management systems for nature protection including management plan for Natura 2000 Sites and transfrontier conservation of *Phalacrocorax pygmeus* and *Aythya nyroca* in the key sites in Romania and Bulgaria.

The inventory and assessment of the current state of conservation of waterbird species: *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*, *Aythya nyroca*, *Mergus albellus*, *Cygnus cygnus*, *Egretta alba*, *Anas platyrhynchos*, *Aythya ferina*, *Aythya fuligula*, *Bucephala clangula* was launched in several natural protected areas; including important feeding and breeding areas for the migratory waterbird species.

The Action Plans for the conservation of Ferruginous Duck (*Aythya nyroca*) and Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*) were elaborated by the Romanian Ornithological Society/BirdLife Romania and will be approved in September 2013.

2) Education and awareness:

The International Day of Biodiversity, the World Wetlands Day, The World Environment Day, the World Migratory Bird Day were celebrated in all the country highlighting the importance of birds species for environment.

A seminar was organised on "*Wetlands and water management*".

Several public awareness material and events were developed: Flyers, posters, leaflets for public awareness regarding the importance of wetlands as habitats for migratory waterbirds were distributed to the public; press release, painting competitions, thematic presentations related to waterbirds and documentaries such is "*Save the birds in Europe*" about the species of Community interest.

3) International cooperation:

In June 2013 an international workshop was organized to raise awareness, for discussing the conservation measures of waterbird species with the experts from Romania, UK, Germany, Hungary, Finland, Slovenia and Turkey.

The Netherlands:

A peer review of the Harvest management model for the Pink footed goose was undertaken and a report "Scientific support to the coordination of the AEWA SSAP for the Black-tailed godwit" was made.

Switzerland:

The government of Switzerland has provided a voluntary contribution to the AEWA to financially support 50% of the position of African Coordinator at the Secretariat.

Ukraine:

A gap analysis and compilation of new data were conducted in Ukraine in 2012 with regards to the species listed in the Red Data Book of Ukraine including a number of AEWA species. A summary of this work is available at http://menr.gov.ua/media/files/NDR_2013_4ervKnyga.doc (in Ukrainian);

The World Migratory Bird Day had been widely celebrated in 2013 in Ukraine. A lot of activities have been implemented. A detailed report on celebration of WMBD is available at <http://menr.gov.ua/content/article/12646> (in Ukrainian).

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

Estonia:

At the 2nd Meeting of AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group in Greece, Estonia, attending the meeting, was elected Chair of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group.

Sweden:

The 2nd of September 2013 The Swedish EPA will present to the Swedish government their proposal for a national monitoring programme covering seabirds, as requested in a government commission. This monitoring programme covers seabirds in all stages, with a particular focus on species that feed mainly on blue mussels. It relies on the monitoring programmes that are currently running, as well as proposing new approaches and censuses.

Finland:

Finland has taking part to the 2nd Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group and to 5th Committee on Captive Breeding, Reintroduction and Supplementation of LW-fG in Fennoscandia

Finland has nominated representatives to the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group

The Netherlands:

We are looking at a possibility to host the next working group for the pink footed Goose in 2014

Romania:

During the 5th edition of the National Eco Camp - Know Life, the wetland "Stânca Costesti Lake" was promoted as one of the most important wintering area, for understanding the functioning of ecosystem, following by the identification of the effects of human activities on the environment.

5) any other relevant information.

Estonia:

The Secretariat has proposed to Estonia to host AEWA Long-tailed Duck Action Planning Workshop in 2014. Preparations and negotiations are ongoing, but no final decision at the moment.

Finland:

Finland has given financial support to the implementation of the SSAP for the Lesser White-Fronted Goose

France:

Two moratoria on the hunting of the Eurasian Curlew and the Black-tailed Godwit were officially decided in July 2013 for a period of 5 years.

The ONCFS has drafted two species management plans for the above species to be implemented in 2014. These plans will be developed with the Ministry of agriculture, considering that many factors others than hunting are involved for the conservation of the species.

Hungary:

In the 2007-2013 EU monetary period, the Environment and Energy Operation Programme supported/support 44 projects that contained wetland restorations. Half of these projects (22) consisted/consist purely of wetland restoration. The 44 projects cover 76 602 ha Natura 2000 areas (not all wetlands), the 22 purely wetland projects cover 39453 ha.

Romania:

Four Ramsar sites were designated in 2012: Bistreț, Lake Calarași (Iezerul Calarași), Olt - Danube Confluence and Suhaia with special importance for migratory waterbirds.

Sweden:

The National Single Species Action Plan for Great Snipe expired in 2013.
