



 **AEWA**

FORMAT FOR REPORTS

OF THE PARTIES

**AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY
WATERBIRDS (The Hague, 1995)**

Implementation during the period ...2006..... and ...2008.....

Contracting Party: Switzerland

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Table of Contents

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation	5
2. Species conservation	6
Legal measures	6
Single Species Action Plans	6
Emergency measures	6
Re-establishments	7
Introductions	7
3. Habitat conservation	8
Habitat inventories	8
Conservation of areas	8
Rehabilitation and restoration	8
4. Management of human activities	9
Hunting	9
Eco-tourism	9
Other human activities	9
5. Research and monitoring	10
Status of research and monitoring programmes for species	10
6. Education and information	11
Training and development programmes	11
Raising public awareness	11
7. Final comments	12
8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties	13
9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions	14
List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report	15
References	16
Appendices	17
Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans	17
Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance	
Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance	17
Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects	17
Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	17

Appendix 6:	List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation	17
Appendix 7:	List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years	17

1. Overview of Action Plan implementation

1.1 Summary of progress to date

In general, the Action Plan is being implemented in Switzerland. However, a thorough analysis of the implementation of distinct parts of the Action Plan has not been carried out due to reduced capacities in the concerned administration unit.

1.2 Outline of planned actions for national implementation over the next three years

Subject to available human resources, a detailed analysis of the implementation of the Action Plan and MOP decisions will take place over the next three years. Gaps identified in the study mentioned in the former national report as well as needed action revealed from the above mentioned analysis will be addressed as a priority in the context of Switzerland's contribution to the 2010 biodiversity target.

1.3 Outline of priorities for international co-operation over the next three years

Switzerland will continue and as far as possible increase its efforts to contribute to the implementation of the AEWA including through financial contributions and will, for this purpose, follow the priorities elaborated by the Agreement.

2. Species conservation

Legal measures

2.1 Has a national policy/strategy or legislation to protect and conserve species covered by the Agreement (Table 1: column A; column B) and their supporting important areas been developed? If so:

a. What are the main features of the policy/legislation?

No further policies or strategies with relevance for the implementation of the AEWA have been developed since the last national report except for a new bit of legislation allowing for national parks, regional natural parks and peri-urban natural parks to be designated and financially subsidised. But these new parks – as far as it is presently foreseeable -- will hardly or only marginally benefit species listed in Table 1. The expansion of the Ordinance on waterbird and migratory birds' reserves to cover also 18 sites of national importance in addition to the 10 sites of international importance so far protected had already taken place during the period covered by a former national report (1998-2002). It has led to an increase of the total protected wetlands for waterbirds of 67% to now nearly 19,000 ha. It has been estimated that with this, a significant proportion of the wintering waterbird numbers, including most species of Table 1 column A and B occurring in Switzerland, is benefiting from site protection including hunting ban.

b. Which organisations are responsible for implementation?

The Federal Council is responsible for the establishment of reserves for waterbirds and migrants of international importance and, in collaboration with the cantons, of reserves of national importance (art. 11, JSG).

The Federal Office for the Environment, FOEN (formerly Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape, SAEFL) is in charge of specifying measures for the implementation of the legal provisions regarding waterbirds and migrants on national level, whereas the cantonal authorities implement legal provisions on local levels.

c. How does it relate to other national initiatives (e.g. national Biodiversity Action Plans)?

2.2 What legal measures or practices has your country developed to prohibit or regulate for the following (refer also to section 4 on hunting):

a. Taking of, and trade in birds listed in Column A and B of Table 1 (where utilization or trade contravenes the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1 (a) and 2.1.2 of the Action Plan)?

The federal hunting law prohibits the taking of birds listed in Column A of Table 1. Six bird species listed in Column B of Table 1 are hunted in Switzerland (i.e. *Anas acuta*, *A. clypeata*, *A. strepera*, *Aythya ferina*, *Melanitta fusca*, and *M. nigra*). However, the taking of these bird species is regulated according to paragraph 2.1.2 of the Action Plan by the Swiss hunting legislation.

The international trade in birds is regulated by the Ordinance on controls within the framework of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES, Ordonnance sur les contrôles dans le cadre de la convention sur la conservation des espèces du 16 juin 1975).

This Ordinance extends the provisions concerning the trade in specimens of species included in Appendix I-III of the Convention to all species protected by the federal hunting law.

b. Methods of taking?

Unwise methods of taking are listed in and banned by the Ordinance to the hunting law (Ordonnance du 29 février 1988 sur la chasse et la protection des mammifères et oiseaux sauvages).

c. Setting of taking limits and monitoring these limits?

No taking limits are set as far as species allowed for hunting are concerned. However, the taking of waterbirds is strongly restricted due to the protection of the most important waterbird areas and through the limited hunting period. Numbers of birds shot by hunters where hunting is allowed are in general relatively low. These numbers can be found in the federal hunting statistics, which are published each year (www.wild.uzh.ch/jagdst/jstatv2.php?la=1).

d. Sustainable hunting of species listed in Categories 2 and 3 (and marked by an asterisk) in Column A only?

No hunting of such species allowed.

e. Exemptions to the provisions set out in paragraphs 2.1.1, 2.1.2 and 2.1.3?

No exemption was granted.

Single Species Action Plans

2.3 Of the species covered by the Agreement (species listed in Table 1: column A), which spend part or all of their life history in your country, which have formal international (Category 1, species marked with an asterisk) or national (column A) Single Species Action Plans:

a. Proposed? none

b. In preparation? none

c. Being implemented? none

Please append a list of species and their action plan status. (For international plans indicate which other countries are involved in plan development/implementation.)

Emergency measures

2.4 Describe any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action that your country has undertaken to develop and implement emergency measures to conserve species in response to unfavourable or endangering conditions occurring in the Agreement area.

Switzerland is party to several multilateral and international Agreements in which measures to prevent the pollution of wetlands are agreed upon.

Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Entry into force for Switzerland on 6-10-1996).

Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Entry into force for Switzerland on 21-5-1999).

Convention for the Protection of the Rhine against Chemical Pollution (Entry into force for Switzerland on 1-2-1979).

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Entry into force for Switzerland on 14-4-1998).

Re-establishments

2.5 Has a policy on species re-establishments been developed in your country? If yes, please outline the main features of the policy and give details of any re-establishment programmes for species covered by the Agreement.

A successful program for the re-establishment of the White Stork has been performed by the Swiss Society for the White Stork (NGO) since 1948. On the basis of the results of this re-establishment programme and the largely successful development of the population of White Storks in Switzerland, a national action plan for the conservation of the species and its habitats has been elaborated by the same NGO (now called Stork Switzerland) with a financial contribution from the Swiss government. Its entry into force is still pending subject to a decision by FOEN. (Published details are available through the AEWA focal point, e-mail: olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch)

Introductions

2.6 Has your country developed and implemented legal measures to prohibit the introduction of nonnative species? Please provide details, particularly describing measures to control the release or introduction of non-native species (please indicate which species and their status).

Introductions are ruled by federal law. Any introduction of non-native species requires approval by federal authorities. In practice, no introduction of waterbirds is performed, although considerable unintentional introductions take place through birds escaped from captivity (see inquiry by Wetlands International).

The Swiss Ornithological Institute has published a report on the status of non-native bird species in Switzerland. The report contains proposals for how to deal with non-native bird species (published details will be available through the AEWA focal point, e-mail: olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch).

Eradication measures are being carried out by several cantons concerning Ruddy Duck and Ferruginous Goose, which are non-native species to Switzerland. The latter has an invasive population that threatens native bird species.

3. Habitat conservation

Habitat inventories

3.1 Has your country developed and published inventories of important habitats for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, please provide details, including any provisions to maintain or update these inventories.

Habitat and sites inventories of most of the important habitats for species covered by the Agreement have been published; they are part to the relevant nature conservation and hunting laws. Implementation takes place under the authorities of the cantons. There are provisions to maintain and update all of the inventories.

The action plan for the White Stork (see above) contains an inventory of its breeding sites and an assessment of its habitat.

3.2 Has your country undertaken a strategic review of sites to develop a national network of important sites or areas for species covered by the Agreement? Please append a list of identified sites of international importance.

An ordinance on the sites for waterbirds and migratory birds of international importance names the relevant sites (see above).

Conservation of areas

3.3 Describe the legal frameworks and other measures through which sites (including transfrontier sites) including of international importance gain practical protection. (Please append a list of internationally important protected sites.)

An ordinance on the sites for waterbirds and migratory birds of international and national importance names the relevant sites. Hunting and other human activities are regulated. Implementation takes place by cantonal authorities.

3.4 Has your country developed a management planning process for protected sites? If yes, please outline the types of management plans and organisations responsible for development and implementation.

There is no systematic management planning process for protected sites in Switzerland. However, some NGOs owning protected sites and certain cantons carry out management measures in a number of sites.

3.5 How many protected sites have formal management plans (please append a list of sites and their management planning status):

No figures are readily available. Management plans are elaborated and carried out partly by cantonal authorities, partly by NGOs. A proper nation wide assessment would still have to be performed.

a. Proposed?

b. In preparation?

3: Fanel, Rade-Rhône, Mies-Versoix
c. *Being implemented?*

3.6 What measures does your country have in place to ensure the wise use of wetland habitats and to prevent habitat degradation e.g. pollution control and managing water resources? Please provide examples of best practice initiatives particularly involving cross-sectoral co-operation or public participation.

Sustainability is a concept fixed as a goal in the Swiss Constitution. Furthermore, in March 2002, the Federal Council has adopted the “Strategy on Sustainable Development 2002”. All measures enumerated in the present National Report intend among other things to ensure the wise use of wetlands in Switzerland.

Rehabilitation and restoration

3.7 Does your country have a policy for the identification, rehabilitation and restoration of wetlands important for species covered by the Agreement? Please provide examples of rehabilitation and restoration projects and initiatives undertaken.

Switzerland has a policy for the identification of wetlands important for species covered by the Agreement, although not specially aimed at their rehabilitation or restoration. Nevertheless, initiatives for the ecological compensation contribute to the rehabilitation or restoration of wetlands.

Furthermore, several projects of habitat restoration and/or rehabilitation have been or are being carried out or are planned in the context of the Federal Inventory of alluvial sites. Several projects favouring the nesting or roosting of waterbirds through the creation of artificial islands on waterbodies have been carried out; most recently a nesting platform for Common Terns has been created at the Fanel on Lake Neuchâtel, the first Ramsar site of Switzerland, by an NGO in cooperation with the cantonal and communal authorities.

4. Management of human activities

Hunting

4.1 Outline the main features of legislation or legal measures in your country to control hunting of the species covered by the Agreement (e.g. use of lead shot and poisoned baits, and to eliminate illegal taking).

Taking of the species covered by the Agreement is ruled by federal hunting law. The ordinance to the hunting law bans the use of lead shots in shallow water and the use of poisoned baits and other unwise hunting practices.

4.2 Does your country monitor hunting levels? If so, how is this information collated and reported?

Hunting is being monitored nation-wide and bag figures are published yearly species by species.

4.3 Describe action undertaken by hunting clubs and organisations to manage hunting activity e.g. cooperative action, issuing of licences and proficiency testing of individual members.

Hunters undergo a formal education and examination

Eco-tourism

4.4 What is the status of eco-tourism programmes or initiatives in your country? Please provide examples of projects with an indication of the significant outcomes.

There are no significant outcomes of eco-tourism in Switzerland, although birdwatching is a widespread activity performed by individuals and societies (NGOs).

4.5 What social and economic benefits accrue to the local communities from the conservation of important waterbird sites?

Social and economic benefits from the conservation of waterbird sites are insignificant.

Other human activities

4.6 Does your country carry out Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of activities potentially affecting protected sites or areas important for species covered by the Agreement? If yes, briefly describe the main features of your EIA policy and procedures.

The principal characteristics of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) are the obligation for the applicant to collaborate actively by providing the necessary data, the participation of the specialised service of the protection of environment in the decision-making process, and a procedure open to the public.

A total of 70 installations types are subject to EIA, classified according to following fields: hydraulic transport, energy, constructions, waste disposal, national defence, sport, tourism and leisure's, industry, other installations.

The EIA contributes in a significant way to the implementation of the principle of precaution. The fact that environment protection organisations have the right to make an objection against the decisions relating to projects subjected to EIA reinforces the efficacy of EIA.

4.7 Please describe the main features of your planning policy and provide examples of practical implementation (e.g. activities to minimising disturbance of species populations or limit the impact of species populations on crops or fisheries). Please summarize any land-use conflicts especially emphasising successful solutions to problems encountered in promoting the wise-use of waterbirds and their habitats.

Town and country planning aims at supporting the efforts made in order to protect the natural bases of life, such as the ground, the air, the water, the forest and the landscape. Protected zones are delimited in plans of assignment. These zones include in particular the rivers and lakes as well as their banks, mire landscapes of particular beauty as well as habitats for animals and plants worthy to be protected. The plans of assignment allow an early detection of potentially conflicting situations.

No severe impact of waterbird species populations on crops was observed so far. However, a negative impact of *Phalacrocorax carbo* on fisheries was claimed in the eighties. A multidisciplinary task force produced a catalogue of measures aimed at settling this conflicting situation (1992, available through the AEWA focal point, e-mail: olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch). The conflict between fishers' associations (including now not only sport but also professional fishermen) and nature and bird protection associations has been exacerbated through the fact that a breeding population of Cormorants is rapidly growing. The task force has been reactivated for an evaluation of the situation.

Other fish eating birds are also subject to legal (and sometimes also illegal) killing; these are mainly *Mergus merganser* and *Ardea cinerea*.

5. Research and monitoring

Status of research and monitoring programmes for species

5.1 How are priorities for research identified in your country? Please briefly describe your country's research programmes, including any bilateral or multilateral co-operative action, for wetland habitats and for species covered by the Agreement (e.g. studies into species population, ecology and migratory patterns). Please append a list of research activities initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years.

Priorities for research are identified individually by the different research institutes. The Swiss Ornithological Institute is particularly dedicated to research and monitoring in the field of wetlands and waterbirds. Together with ornithological societies and a few hundred voluntary ornithologists, it carries out the mid winter waterbird census in co-ordination with Wetlands International.

5.2 What monitoring activities does your country undertake, including any bilateral or multilateral cooperative action, of wetland areas and species covered by the Agreement (e.g. national monitoring schemes, International Waterfowl Census)? Please append a list of monitoring activities or programmes initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years

The FOEN (former SAEFL) is carrying out a programme called "Biodiversity Monitoring in Switzerland" (BDM). This monitoring programme involves experts commissioned by the Federal Government who will survey indicator animal and plant species in a large number of selected areas over the whole of Switzerland, including wetlands.

The Swiss Ornithological Institute and the Société romande pour l'étude et la protection des oiseaux "Nos Oiseaux" have a co-ordinated national monitoring scheme, and they carry out the IWC, whose results are published in "Nos Oiseaux" and in "Der Ornithologische Beobachter".

6. Education and information

Training and development programmes

6.1 Describe the status of training and development programmes which support waterbird conservation and implement the AEWA Action Plan.

There are no training or development programmes specific to the AEWA Action Plan, but training in general nature conservation is taken care of by some NGOs.

6.2 What bilateral or multilateral co-operative action is your country undertaking to develop training programmes and share examples of good practice?

No current projects in this field

Raising public awareness

6.3 Describe activities to raise public awareness of the objectives of the AEWA Action Plan. Please outline any particular successes generating public interest in, and securing support for, waterbird and wetland conservation (e.g. campaigns, information notes or other initiatives)?

NGOs regularly campaign for the conservation of wetlands and the protection of waterbirds

7. Final comments

7.1 General comments on the implementation of the AEWA Action Plan

7.2 Observations concerning the functions and services of the various AEWA bodies

a. The Agreement Secretariat

b. International organisations

c. AEWA NGO partners

7.3 How might the Action Plan be further developed as a practical aid for national and international conservation of migratory waterbirds?

8. Progress to implement Resolutions and Recommendations of the Meeting of the Parties

Please summarize progress to implement decisions of previous Meetings of the Parties.

Due to lack of capacities, no detailed assessment has been made of the implementation of single decisions of previous meetings.

9. OPTIONAL SECTION – Planned and future actions

Contracting Parties are invited to outline below any further information regarding the aims of the Agreement, for example, planned actions or other informative examples.

1. Species conservation
2. Habitat conservation
3. Management of human activities
4. Research and monitoring
5. Education and information

List of abbreviations and acronyms used in the report

References

Appendices

Appendix 1: Status of Single Species Action Plans

Appendix 2: List of sites of international importance

Site	Protected since	Revision
Ermatingerbecken	1991	
Stein am Rhein	1991	2001
Klingnauerstausee	1991	
Fanel–Chablais de Cudrefin, Pointe de Marin	1991	2001
Chevroux - Portalban	1991	2001
Yvonand - Cheyres	1991	2001
Grandson - Champ-Pittet	1991	2001
Les Grangettes	1991	2001
Rhône - Verbois	1991	2001
Versoix - Genf	2001	

Appendix 3: Status of management plans for sites of international importance

Appendix 4: List of research and monitoring programmes and projects

Information available at the Swiss Ornithological Institute (CH-6204 Sempach)
«www.vogelwarte.ch»

Appendix 5: List of national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

Addresses available through the Swiss AEWA focal point (e-mail:
olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch).

Appendix 6: List of relevant World Wide Web addresses for national institutions involved in migratory waterbird conservation

Appendix 7: List of relevant migratory waterbird and habitat conservation projects initiated, ongoing or completed in the last three years

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