



11th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
27 – 30 August 2012, Accra, Ghana

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

INTRODUCTION

The current report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period between September 2011 and July 2012.

This report is divided into five sections:

1. General management, which includes administrative and staffing issues, recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organisations;
2. Information management;
3. Implementation and compliance;
4. Project development;
5. Other activities and outputs.

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat, which includes responding to incoming mails, maintaining the Secretariat's extensive network, internal meetings with CMS, UNEP and/or UN Head of Agencies etc. are not specifically mentioned in this report.

1. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Staffing

Regular staff

As of 1 May 2011 Mr Bert Lenten was appointed for the position of Deputy Executive Secretary of CMS and stepped down as Executive Secretary of AEWA. The initiative for filling the vacant post of Executive Secretary of AEWA was taken by the Executive Secretary of CMS, in accordance with the provisions of AEWA Res. 1.1. Considering that the position had last been classified at P-4 level in 2003, in accordance with applicable UN rules, the position had to be reclassified before being advertised. A job description for the position reflecting the current tasks and responsibilities was therefore prepared by the CMS Executive Secretary and submitted to UNEP for classification.

The assessment made by UNEP determined that the correct level of the position should be P-5. At that stage, a decision from the Parties was needed to determine at what level the position should be filled for UNEP to be able to proceed with the recruitment process. The issue was submitted to the AEWA Standing Committee at its 7th Meeting (Bergen Norway, 26-27 November 2011). The meeting acknowledged that the body competent to make a final decision about the level of the position was the MOP. The Standing Committee also discussed the language proficiency requirements for the position, and agreed that fluency in French or English and a working knowledge of the other language were required.

MOP5 eventually decided to maintain the position at the P-4 level. At the time of writing, the job description for the position is being revised by UNEP before the post is advertised through the UN Human Resources Recruitment System INSPIRA.

To fill the vacant position on an interim basis and ensure the workflow in absence of a permanent Executive Secretary, a selection process among eligible internal candidates was undertaken by the Executive Secretary of CMS, in consultation with the UNEP Executive Director. Following this process, Mr Marco Barbieri was nominated as Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA. He entered on duty on 2 May 2011.

Temporary staff

Since May 2009, Ms Nina Mikander has been in charge of the coordination of the Lesser White-fronted Goose Action Plan. Ms Mikander's post has been funded through voluntary contributions received from the Governments of Norway and Finland. The Government of Norway has pledged to cover the position for the years 2013-2014 as a project post at the P-2 level at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. At the time of writing, the process of advertisement of the position through the UN Human Resources Recruitment System INSPIRA is underway.

In August 2009, Ms Evelyn Moloko was recruited as Coordinator for the African Initiative. Ms Moloko's post was initially funded through voluntary contributions received from the Government of France. Those resources covered the salary of Ms Moloko until December 2011. Since January 2012, in the absence of additional voluntary contributions, the position is being funded from Trust Fund resources using savings from other personnel budget lines, as authorised by the Standing Committee at its 7th Meeting. MOP5 approved the establishment of a part time (50%) post of Associate Programme Officer/African Coordinator, at the P-2 level (fixed-term) as of January 2013, to be based in the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in Bonn, and instructed the Secretariat to find additional funding in the form of voluntary contributions to extend the post of Associate Programme Officer/African Coordinator beyond 50%. MOP5 also requested the Standing Committee to assess the need to establish the post of Programme Assistant for the African Initiative.

The Information Assistant and the Associate Programme Officer were on maternity leave from early April until the end of October 2010 and from the end of April until the end of December 2010 respectively. Ms Birgit Drerup was contracted under a fixed-term contract in August 2010 to temporarily fill the gaps within the AEWA Team and to ensure that activities, such as World Migratory Bird Day and the 15th Anniversary Symposium could be carried out as scheduled. As the Associate Programme Officer has been working on a part-time basis since her return from maternity leave, as allowed by applicable UN rules, and the need of G-staff support has significantly increased with the recruitment of the positions of Coordinators of the Lesser White-fronted Goose Action Plan and the African Initiative, the contract of Ms Birgit Drerup was extended to ensure continuous support to the team. Ms Drerup meanwhile holds a G-4 fixed-term contract and works on an 80 % basis. One of her main tasks besides supporting the African Coordinator and Associate Programme Officer in their daily work was the coordination of logistical arrangements for MOP5.

In August 2011, the AEWA Secretariat contracted a Consultant (Ms Laura Blondé) for the purpose of supporting the Parties and the Secretariat throughout the national reporting cycle towards MOP5. The assignment was completed by December 2011.

Interns

The AEWA Secretariat participates in the CMS Family Internship Programme. In the framework of this programme, the following interns have supported the work of the AEWA Secretariat in the period under consideration:

Name	Nationality	Main tasks carried out in the period¹
Ms Ana-Christina Wegelin	Brazilian	To assist with outreach and communications work and the preparation of WMBD 2012 (August – October 2011)
Mr Tobias Fiedler	German	To assist with preparations for the 10 th AEWA Technical Committee Meeting (July – September 2011)
Ms Dominika Kasprzak	Polish	To assist with the development and improvement of the Online National Reporting System, WMBD 2012 preparations and other AEWA information/communications related work. (July – October 2011)

¹ Besides these main tasks, all temporary staff supported the Secretariat in its day-to-day work.

Ms Rojin Kiadeh	British	To assist with the preparation of an accession meeting and subsequent Lesser White-fronted Goose Workshop in Iran 2012 (August-September 2011)
Ms Lonneke van Dijk	Dutch	To support the AEWA Information Unit in preparing materials for the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2012 campaign and in customising the AEWA Online National Reporting Template (November 2011 – January 2012)
Ms Gesa Heinichen	German	To assist with tasks associated with the national reporting cycle to MOP5, compile a conservation review on the Dark-bellied Brent Goose and assist with the formatting and preparation of MOP5 documents (January-April 2012)

Recruitment of Parties

The Republic of Chad and Montenegro became Contracting Parties to AEWA as of 1 November 2011. Zimbabwe became a Contracting Party as of 1 June 2012, bringing the total number of Contracting Parties to AEWA to 66. For several other countries, notably Azerbaijan, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Mauritania, Swaziland and Zambia, the process of joining the Agreement is reported to be at an advanced stage. In particular, the status of the accession process was reported to MOP5 by several of the above-mentioned countries. Gabon and Mauritania reported having completed the accession formalities, including the production of the relevant instrument of accession to be submitted to the depositary. Côte d'Ivoire was completing the final stages of accession. The Icelandic Parliament had approved joining AEWA; the process should be complete by the end of 2012. In addition to the above-mentioned countries, Poland reported that the accession procedure had been initiated and should be completed in 2013.

A promotional workshop for the Russian Federation was organised in Moscow from 30 to 31 March 2010 with the support of the Embassy of the Netherlands in Moscow and the Government of Switzerland. The workshop, chaired by the AEWA Honorary Patron Dr. Gerard C. Boere, was attended by national and international experts and representatives of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Ecology.

For more information please see:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2010/moscow_workshop.htm

As a follow-up to the AEWA promotional workshop in Moscow in March 2010, already reported to TC10, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Russian Federation organised a one-day workshop aiming at identifying international cooperation mechanisms for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and also for hunting regulations. The workshop was held in the margins of the exhibition "Horse and Hunt" at the Exhibition Centre in Hannover, Germany on 2 December 2011. The workshop had a clear focus on the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the Eurasian part of the Russian Federation. In this context, participants reviewed the role of CMS and, in particular, of AEWA and its potential for the Russian Federation. In addition, the concrete terms under which the Russian Government could ratify AEWA were discussed. A set of recommendations summarising the outcome of the workshop is available at

http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/resolution_workshop_Hannover.pdf

For more information please see:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/workshop-hannover.htm

The representative of the Russian Federation at MOP5 reported that the necessary preliminary consultations, prior to initiating the process of joining AEWA, were expected to be held following formation of the new Government of the Russian Federation.

Strategic cooperation with other Organisations

Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF)

A Resolution of Cooperation (ROC) between the CAFF and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariats was signed on the occasion of the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention on

12 July 2012 in Bucharest, Romania. The purpose of this ROC is to provide a framework of cooperation and understanding and to facilitate collaboration between the Parties to further their shared goals and objectives with regard to the conservation of seabirds and arctic birds and their habitats. Particularly the work of the CBird working group (Circumpolar Seabird Group) is of interest for AEWA. Under the ROC, CAFF intends to seek opportunities to raise awareness and to use relevant and available opportunities to promote the importance of migratory waterbird species including the promotion of World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) in the CAFF region.

2. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

From 2006 until the end of 2010, the Associate Information Officer allocated 50 per cent of his working time towards the *Wings over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project* where his function was as Communication Officer for the WOW project. Hence, the time he could actually spend on purely AEWA-related communication issues during the course of the WOW project was limited. To compensate for this, it was decided to divide some of the tasks among other team members and the Information Management within the Secretariat has evolved into a team effort. Since 2011, the time of the Associate Information Officer has been fully dedicated to the Information Management of AEWA. However, the annual World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign has developed significantly over the years, whereby the central coordination of the campaign has also been the task of the AEWA Information Officer over the past years. The WMBD campaign creates an additional workload to the regular tasks of the AEWA Information Unit, which can hardly be dealt within the current team composition. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is therefore exploring different options with respect to the handling of WMBD, including more support from the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and key NGOs to assist with the organisation of the campaign. The present report provides only a summary of the main information management-related activities since September 2011. More detailed information on information activities and related strategic considerations can be found in several MOP5 meeting documents prepared by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

E-Newsletter

The AEWA Electronic Newsletter, recommended in the Communication Strategy, is being produced and sent out four to five times per year. In the period under consideration, 3 issues of the Newsletter have been produced, in November 2011, March and May 2012. The aim of the E-Newsletter is to inform the Agreement's network about recent AEWA activities and related news. Currently the E-Newsletter is sent out to over 3,800 people and new subscribers are joining via an online registration system on a regular basis. The E-Newsletter has evolved into one of the main communication tools available to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and its production involves the entire Secretariat team.

http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/e_newsletter_archive.htm

Finalisation of the Online National Reporting System (ORS)

In the framework of a UNEP project, launched in 2006 and funded by the Government of Norway, to work on strengthening the implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions through the strategic use of information/knowledge management among UNEP-administered MEAs, an online national reporting system has been developed for the national reports of the Contracting Parties to AEWA and CMS.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, which has taken the lead in this project on behalf of AEWA and CMS, has been working very closely with UNEP-WCMC over the past years. The newly developed online reporting format was presented to MOP4 and adopted, and the Online National Reporting Tool, which was developed as a CMS Family tool and could be expanded to other instruments under CMS, was finalised in 2010/2011 in close collaboration between the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC. A demonstration of the online template was given at TC10. At the meeting, a small consultation group was established, tasked with assisting the Secretariat in designing the analyses to be undertaken on the national reports submitted within the reporting cycle to MOP5. The outcome was a detailed analysis matrix, which was then consulted with the whole of the TC via the TC Work Space. Following up a request from the Parties to pre-populate the online format where data are readily available, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat contracted a consultant tasked with inserting all available information into the system in order to reduce the workload for Parties who had to use

the system for the first time prior to MOP5. More details concerning the development of the reporting format and the ORS can be found in document AEWA/MOP 5.13 submitted to MOP5.

The majority of Parties submitted their reports after the deadline of 14 January 2012 and the Secretariat continued accepting late submissions until six weeks later, i.e. by 23 February 2012. After that date, all submitted reports were analysed. By the cut-off date of 23 February, 43 National Reports or 69% of the due reports were submitted through the ORS. This is the highest submission rate achieved to date. One report was submitted after the cut-off date, increasing the overall submission rate to 71%; however, the information from this report could not be included in the analysis.

The analysis of national reports for the triennium 2009-2011 was commissioned by the Secretariat to UNEP-WCMC. The draft of the analysis was reviewed and commented by the Secretariat and the Technical Committee. The final analysis submitted to MOP5 is included in document AEWA/MOP 5.12. Results of this analysis were used in the compilation of the Report on the implementation of the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 (document AEWA/MOP 5.11).

Websites

AEWA website (www.unep-aewa.org)

The AEWA website has continuously developed over the last years. Besides the *News* section, which is updated at least once per week, a number of new pages have been created providing in depth and up-to-date information on ongoing activities, e.g. for the conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose and the activities in the framework of the African Initiative. A press and media resources page provides audio-visual materials and links to different AEWA resources that can be used for media purposes. The AEWA website in its current form was developed in 2003/2004 and although it continues to fulfil its basic function, it is starting to become technologically out-dated.

CMS Family Website Concept

At the special session of the CMS Management Meeting (MM) which took place during an internal CMS Family Retreat in March 2011, it was decided to create a "Website Working Group", initially consisting of staff from the UNEP/CMS Secretariat and all Bonn-based CMS Agreements including AEWA, to develop a project concept/proposal for a future CMS Family Website. After its creation, the Website WG agreed to follow a full participatory and transparent process in the development of this proposal, i.e. one which would gain from input from all CMS Family staff and also incorporate feedback from the Parties.

The original project proposal (see AEWA/MOP Inf. 5.10) was jointly prepared by the Secretariats of CMS, AEWA, ASCOBANS, EUROBATS and the Gorillas Agreement and presented to CMS COP10 in November 2011 in Bergen, Norway. Further information on the AEWA Website and the CMS Family Website Project were provided to MOP5 in document AEWA/MOP 5.18. A voluntary contribution from the Government of Germany to CMS has enabled CMS to tender out the technical work to build a common web-based database structure for CMS and participating CMS Instruments. The work carried out under this project will provide the technical foundation to enable the creation of a common CMS Family Website. The common database structure will also allow for greater exchange and use of information between the participating CMS Family Instruments, as well as better interoperability of CMS Family data with external portals such as InforMea.

TC Workspace (<http://teworkspace.aewa.info/>)

The AEWA TC Workspace has become a primary online collaboration tool for the AEWA Technical Committee and is being actively used by TC Members and Observers and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to support the ongoing work of the TC, especially between face-to-face meetings. Further information on the TC Workspace can be found in MOP5 documents AEWA/MOP 5.7, AEWA/MOP 5.9 and AEWA/MOP 5.18. The AEWA TC Workspace is currently undergoing an upgrade and is being used as a model for the creation of similar "workspaces" for other CMS Instrument technical and scientific bodies. The project is made possible through a voluntary contribution from the Government of Switzerland and will result in a number of new functionalities being added to the TC Workspace, as well as a more up-to-date back-end system (upgrade to the latest version of the Content Management System Drupal being used).

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) website (www.worldmigratorybirdday.org)

The centre of the annual WMBD campaign is the WMBD website. Since its development in 2006, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has taken the lead in managing and updating this online resource. Each year a small team of interns, working under the supervision of the Associate Information Officer, helped to develop and customise the WMBD website to fit the annually selected theme. Further information on World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) can be found in document AEWA/MOP 5.18.

AEWA International SSAP Working Group Websites

Within the framework of the implementation of the Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose and the Black-tailed Godwit, special websites which include an internal workspace, have been developed by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat with the assistance of an external technical expert. The publicly-accessible websites will function as a platform to showcase the international conservation work being coordinated by these AEWA SSAP Working Groups, whilst the internal workspaces will be used for communication between Working Group Members and Observers in the inter-sessional periods between Working Group meetings. Although the Content Management System template being used is a new one, the workspace has been modelled on the TC Workspace in terms of the collaboration features it offers. Further information on the AEWA SSAP Working Group Workspaces can be found in MOP5 documents AEWA/MOP 5.10 and AEWA/MOP 5.18.

Information materials and publications

Posters, Banners, Stickers

Customised World Migratory Bird Day posters were designed, printed and distributed by the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats in 2012. In addition, a poster for the Lesser White-fronted Goose has been designed in-house in several relevant languages. Several new species stickers were printed in 2011 and 2012, depicting the following AEWA species: Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*), White Stork (*Ciconia ciconia*), White-winged Flufftail (*Sarothrura ayresi*), Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*), Slaty Egret (*Egretta vinaceigula*), White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*), Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*), Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*), Madagascar Pond-heron (*Ardeola idea*) and Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*), Blue Crane (*Grus paradisea*), Cape Gannet (*Morus capensis*), Shoebill (*Balaeniceps rex*), Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*), Wattled Crane (*Grus carunculatus*), Grey Crowned Crane (*Balearica regulorum*), African Penguin (*Spheniscus demersus*), Bank Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax neglectus*). Species banners for all AEWA International SSAP Working Groups have also been produced in the run-up to AEWA MOP5. These can also be used for SSAP Working Group meetings in future. An African Initiative banner was also designed in-house and produced in English and French for use at the AEWA MOP5 as well as for future meetings related to the initiative.

AEWA Exhibition Stand

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has developed a new 80 cm x 2m display for use at public events and presentations.

New General Leaflet on AEWA: Tool for International Cooperation

A new general leaflet on AEWA available in English, French and German has been developed in 2012. The publication gives a concise, easy-to-read introduction to the Agreement. Effort was made to make the publication as timeless and attractive as it can be. It includes a map showing a number of flyways of AEWA species projected on the official AEWA Agreement area and a selection of high-quality AEWA species photos.

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/publications/aboutaewa/>

Introduced Non-Native Waterbirds: Status within the African-Eurasian Flyways

This publication is a summary and popular version of the full report on the status of introduced non-native waterbird species in the area of the Agreement (update 2007) prepared by the British Trust for Ornithology and submitted to the 4th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (September 2008).

http://www.unep-aewa.org/publications/popular_series.htm/non_native_species.pdf

http://www.unep-aewa.org/publications/popular_series.htm/non_native_species_fr.pdf

African Initiative Flyer

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat, developed a flyer on the implementation of the African Initiative, which highlights some key outcomes of the efforts invested on the initiative. The flyer is available as hardcopy and electronically in English and French.

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/publications/africa>

World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) 2012

WMBD is a common CMS-AEWA activity; however the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has taken the lead in the overall coordination of WMBD outreach activities. In 2012 WMBD coincided with MOP5, and preparing for the latter required most of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat's attention and effort. The AEWA and CMS Secretariats therefore agreed that the CMS Secretariat would have taken a stronger role in organising the seventh WMBD campaign. Moreover, the Secretariats are currently considering different options on how to deal with the WMBD preparation in the long term. Further information on WMBD can be found in MOP5 document AEWA/MOP 5.18.

World Migratory Bird Day 2012 took place on 12-13 May 2012 and celebrated the connections and relationships between migratory birds and people. The theme for 2012 was "Migratory birds and people - together through time" highlighting the cultural, social, historic, economic and spiritual connections we have with birds. The 2012 theme was deliberately very similar to the central theme of AEWA MOP5 which took place in the week directly following World Migratory Bird Day from 14 to 18 May 2012. Over 250 events in a record 78 countries celebrated and raised awareness about migratory birds, making it the most successful of the seven campaigns held since the inception of WMBD in 2006.

3. IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

Contracting Parties are responsible and involved in the implementation of and compliance with the provisions laid down in the Agreement. Their National Reports provide the necessary information to enable an assessment on progress made in this respect. However, the Agreement Secretariat is partly responsible and also involved in the implementation and/ or compliance of the Agreement. Hereafter you will find information on the role of the Secretariat in this respect.

International Implementation Tasks (IIT)

The IIT 2009-2016 include 31 projects, of which 13 have - at least partly - been implemented since 2009 (most of them in the framework of the WOW project), including the following projects:

SPECIES CONSERVATION

- Implement existing international single species action plans
- Develop new international single species action plans

HABITAT CONSERVATION

- Identify all sites of international importance for AEWA species
- Create an interactive tool that presents information on important sites for migratory waterbirds
- Publish priority areas for better protection

RESEARCH AND MONITORING

- Survey work in poorly-known areas
- International Waterbird Census – special gap-filling surveys

EDUCATION AND INFORMATION

- Improving survey and monitoring capacity for migratory waterbirds
- Regional training programmes in Africa for implementation of the Agreement
- Regional workshops for the promotion of the Agreement
- Communicating the importance of a network of critical sites for migratory waterbirds

For a more detailed overview please see MOP5 document AEWA/MOP 5.17 Corr.1.

The IITs for 2013-2015 were updated by MOP5 after a proposed revised list by the TC (Resolution 5.3).

The African Initiative to strengthen the conservation of waterbirds and their habitats

A detailed report of activities undertaken with the support of the Secretariat within the African Initiative is provided in document AEWA/MOP 5.32. This report will provide some details only on progress in the development and adoption of the Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017 and the implementation of the 2nd and 3rd cycles of the AEWA Small Grant Fund (SGF).

Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017

The development of a draft Plan of Action (PoA) for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in Africa was a key recommendation under Resolution 4.9 on the African Initiative¹.

A preliminary draft PoA for Africa (Draft 1) was compiled following an assessment of the problems faced and needs for migratory waterbird conservation in Africa, through a review of existing information and work done by AEWA and its partners, conducted during 2010. The AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017 was used as the framework for the development of the preliminary draft PoA for Africa, in such a way that the document should serve as an operational guideline for the implementation of the Strategic Plan in Africa, meanwhile streamlining it with the existing hierarchy of documents guiding the implementation of the Agreement.

This first draft document was made available on the AEWA Technical Committee (TC) workspace for comments and guidance from the TC members. A revised version of the document (Draft 2) compiled by the Secretariat and taking into account the comments from TC members, was discussed at TC10. Following recommendations and guidance from TC10, a questionnaire was prepared by the Secretariat to address key issues raised by the meeting and to obtain further input from the African Parties and other stakeholders on the further development of Draft 2.

Prior to administering this questionnaire, the African Coordinator met with AEWA National Focal Points and contact persons from some African Parties and non-Parties to inform them about the status of the development of the draft PoA for Africa and encourage their input in the further development of the document. This was done in the framework of the Ramsar pre-COP11 meeting² (from 3-8 October 2011, involving Kenya, Senegal, Uganda, Morocco, Comoros, Namibia, Burkina Faso) and the CMS/AEWA pre-COP10/MOP5³ meeting (from 26-28 October 2011, involving Benin, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Madagascar, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania).

On 3 November 2011, the questionnaire was sent to AEWA Parties in Africa, some non-African donor Parties and key AEWA partners with activities in Africa, alongside a further revised draft of the PoA (Draft 3) which took into consideration further comments from the AEWA TC10 meeting. The Secretariat proactively approached African countries, non-African donor Parties and partners, to solicit feedback on the questionnaire and further comments on the Draft 3 of the document.

Upon analysis of the questionnaire results⁴, the need for additional input from the African Parties and other stakeholders became evident. With a view to fulfilling this need, the Secretariat decided to organise an African regional preparatory workshop for the AEWA MOP5 (La Rochelle, 12-13 May 2012). The organisation of this workshop was made possible thanks to a voluntary financial contribution from the ENRTP⁵ Strategic Cooperation Agreement (SCA) between the European Commission - Directorate General (DG) for the Environment and UNEP.

1 AEWA Strategic Plan: http://www.unep-aewa.org/documents/strategic_plan/strategic_plan_2009-2017.pdf

2 Ramsar Pre-COP11 meeting: http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/ramsar_africa_regional_meeting.htm

3 CMS/AEWA Pre COP10/MOP5 workshop: http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2011/pre_cop_uganda.htm

4 Information note on the outcome of the African Plan of Action questionnaire: http://www.unep-aewa.org/activities/africaninitiative/pdf/PoA_questionnaire_outcome_FIN_EN.pdf

5 ENRTP: Thematic Programme for Environment and Sustainable Management of Natural Resources including Energy: http://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/how/finance/dci/environment_en.htm

A third revision (Draft 4) taking into account further comments received through the questionnaire and from further consultation with the African Parties and other stakeholders, was developed prior to the workshop by an independent expert contracted by the Secretariat to support the organisation and facilitation of the African pre-MOP5 workshop and the further development of the draft PoA for Africa.

Draft4 of the PoA for Africa 2012-2017 was thoroughly reviewed by the above-mentioned African regional preparatory workshop, which produced a final draft (draft5) that was submitted to AEWA MOP5 for consideration and adoption. The final version of the PoA adopted by MOP5 is annexed to Res. 5.9 Further information on the development of the PoA for Africa 2012-2017 can be found in MOP5 document AEWA/MOP 5.18.

AEWA Small Grant Fund (SGF)

The 2nd cycle of the AEWA SGF was launched in May 2011, for projects in Africa. Of the 16 project proposals received, two projects from two African countries (United Republic of Tanzania and Ghana) were funded for a total amount of 43,400 Euros. The first project aims to support the conservation of the Lesser Flamingo (*Phoeniconaias minor*) in the Lake Natron Basin Ramsar Site in Tanzania, through supporting the implementation of the CMS/AEWA Single Species Action Plan for the species, as well as the recommendations of the joint Ramsar/CMS/AEWA Ramsar Advisory Mission to the site in February 2008. The second project aims to establish waterbird population trends for key coastal sites in Ghana through the analysis of over 20 years of waterbird count data, as well as to determine changes in habitat conditions through analysing demographic data for the Sanderling (*Calidris alba*). More information on these projects can be found here: http://www.unep-aewa.org/activities/small_grants_fund/cycle2011.htm. One additional project from the 2011 SGF cycle was assessed as eligible for funding, should additional funds become available. This project concerns the conservation of Lake Nokoué waterbird sanctuary in Benin through income generating activities. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been seeking voluntary financial contributions from governments, development agencies and other donors to support the implementation of this project.

In June 2012, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has called for applications from eligible African countries for the 3rd cycle of the Small Grants Fund (SGF). The deadline for submission of project proposals is 27 July 2012. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has been providing advisory services to prospective project proponents from African countries and has so far received two project proposals, one of which is eligible for evaluation. The call strongly encourages proponents to consider submitting project proposals which contribute to the implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017.

Coordination and implementation of Single Species Action Plans and Species Management Plans

Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*)

Saudi Arabia has invited the 1st Meeting of the AEWA Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group to take place at the end of November 2012. The meeting is being organised collaboratively by the coordinating team based at BirdLife International and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*)

The revised International Single Species Action Plan for the Red-breasted Goose under the framework of AEWA was adopted by MOP5.

Sociable Lapwing (*Vanellus gregarius*)

The revised International Single Species Action Plan for the Sociable Lapwing was adopted by MOP5.

Black-tailed Godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

A meeting of the West European breeding Range States will take place in the Netherlands in October 2012 convened by the Coordinator provided through the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation.

Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*)

The second meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group will be held at Lake Kerkini in Greece on the 9.-11. November 2012, within the framework of the EU LIFE+ project "Safeguarding the Lesser White-fronted Goose".

Additional activities undertaken within the framework of the Working Group in 2012 include the finalisation of a website and internal workspace for the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group. In 2012 the Secretariat developed a general awareness-raising poster for the LWfG together with key stakeholders, which was funded by the German Government. The poster is currently available in English, Russian, Kazakh and Arabic. In addition, the Secretariat has worked closely with WWF Finland and the Norwegian Ornithological Society to produce a LWfG field guide focusing on the basics of LWfG identification and monitoring. The field guide will also be made available in several languages.

Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*)

A meeting on kicking off the implementation of the PfG International Species Management Plan will take place in August 2012 hosted by the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management on Svalbard.

Implementation Review Process (IRP)

MOP4 agreed to establish an implementation review process through Resolution 4.6. The main reason for the Meeting of the Parties to take this decision was the lack of implementation of the Agreement and the increasing number of cases of waterbirds or sites that might become affected by human activities. It was decided that the Standing Committee would undertake this process and the Secretariat will assist the Committee in its functions.

No further progress has been made on the IRP case on illegal killing of Sociable Lapwings in Syria, as reported to TC10, and reports from the Syrian Government are expected.

Two more IRP cases emerged in early 2012 on the drainage for tourism development in the salina of Ulcinj in Montenegro and on windfarm development near Lake Durankulak in Bulgaria threatening the globally threatened Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*); the Standing Committee has addressed the Governments of both states.

An IRP mission was welcomed by the Minister of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro and a joint mission with the Ramsar, Bern and CMS Convention Secretariats is being prepared.

A letter has been received from the Deputy Minister of Environment and Water of Bulgaria requesting clarifications from the Secretariat on the exact windfarming project being questioned. A response was submitted and further communication from the Bulgarian authorities is expected.

A detailed report on the three cases is available in document AEWA/MOP 5.16.

International reviews

In accordance with paragraphs 7.4 and 7.5 of the AEWA Action Plan, the Agreement Secretariat, in coordination with the Technical Committee and the Parties, shall prepare in intervals of three to nine years, a series of international reviews necessary for the implementation of the Action Plan including:

- a) reports on the status and trends of populations;
- b) gaps in information from surveys;
- c) the networks of sites used by each population, including reviews of the protection status of each site as well as the management measures taken in each case;
- d) pertinent hunting and trade legislation in each country relating to the species listed in Annex 2 to this Agreement;
- e) the stage of preparation and implementation of single species action plans;
- f) re-establishment projects; and
- g) the status of introduced non-native waterbird species and hybrids thereof.

In the period under consideration, the reviews foreseen under a) and c) above were produced. The 5th edition of the Conservation Status Report was presented to MOP5 in document AEWA/MOP 5.14. The 1st edition of the Site Network Report (item “c” above) was presented as a preliminary paper in document AEWA/MOP 5.15 and the report shall be finalised by the TC for submission to MOP6 n 2015.

4. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Project on “Enhancing the capacity for conservation planning in the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement area”

Since a significant sum was missing to fully implement all activities planned under the WOW project, the focus of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat’s fundraising efforts since 2009 has been on finding the funds to fill this gap. A project proposal was developed in close cooperation with Wetlands International in mid-2009 to apply for funding under the European Commission’s Thematic Programme for Environment and sustainable management of Natural Resources, including energy (ENRTP) and an 18-month project focusing on matching activities to the WOW project was approved and funded under the title “Enhancing the capacity for conservation planning in the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement Area”. The funding received for this project amounted to € 200,000. The project has been completed and final reports have been submitted to the donor.

Project on “Effective Implementation of CMS, AEWA and other CMS-Family instruments across various regions and languages through capacity building”

Addressing the need for improving the capacity of institutions responsible for implementing CMS and AEWA (As laid down in the CMS Strategic Plan 2012-2014, CMS COP10 Capacity Building Work Plan for 2012-2014 and the AEWA Action Plan and Strategic Plan 2009-2017), both Secretariats developed and submitted a project proposal which was approved for a € 500,000 grant under the EU ENRTP SCA between the European Commission – DG Environment and UNEP for the above mentioned project. The project is currently being implemented by the UNEP/CMS and UNEP/AEWA Secretariats and focuses on the African region.

The project has four major outputs which aim at addressing the overall objective of strengthening the institutional capacity to implement CMS, AEWA and other CMS instruments:

- Supporting the organisation of the African preparatory workshop for the AEWA MOP5, aimed at finalising the draft Plan of Action for Africa which was approved by the meeting, and enhancing the participation of the African region at the MOP (accomplished in May 2012);
- Training National Focal Points (NFP) of CMS, AEWA and other CMS instruments in their roles and responsibilities with the support of designed and developed manual, e-learning tool and associated workshops (scheduled for 2012);
- Improving knowledge on waterbird and wetland conservation and improved capacity for training at the national level in Africa, through two Training of Trainers sessions using the WOW Flyway Training Kit (for Anglophone countries in Southern and Eastern Africa and Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa, where urgent gaps were identified) – scheduled for 2013.
- Enhancing the participation of NFPs from the Africa and Latin America regions in the CMS COP 11 and AEWA MOP6 (scheduled for 2014);

5. OTHER ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

7th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee

This meeting was held in Bergen, Norway on 26 - 27 November 2011, at the kind invitation of the Directorate of Nature Management of the Government of Norway. The documentation for the meeting can be found at the URL:

http://www.unep-awa.org/meetings/en/stc_meetings/stc7docs/stc7_docs.htm

The report of the meeting can be found at the URL:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/stc_meetings/stc7docs/stc7_final_report.htm

8th Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee

The meeting was held in La Rochelle, France, on 18 May 2012, immediately after the conclusion of MOP5. The documentation for the meeting can be found at the URL:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/stc_meetings/stc8docs/stc8_docs.htm

The report of the meeting is being produced at the time of writing.

5th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP5)

The Secretariat has organised the session in close collaboration with the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing of France, and participated in several meetings of the MOP5 Organising Committee established by the French Government. Three joint visits to La Rochelle were undertaken by representatives of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transport and Housing for the logistical preparations. Further information on MOP5 and all relevant meeting documents can be found on the designated MOP5 webpage:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop5_docs/mop5.htm

New policy-related developments

Some policy-related developments are taking place within the AEWA region, which are potentially of great significance for the future of the Agreement:

Central Asian Flyway (CAF)

In early 2008, CMS launched the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Action Plan. CAF covers 30 range states of which 16 are located within the AEWA Agreement Area. Also half of the populations listed in this Action Plan are already covered by AEWA. The UNEP/CMS Secretariat convened an intergovernmental negotiation meeting aimed at clarifying the preferred legal and institutional arrangements for a CMS instrument on this flyway on 12-13 December 2012 in Abu Dhabi following the 1st Meeting of the Signatories to the Raptors MoU. A presentation of this issue was given to MOP5 by the UNEP/CMS Secretariat (Doc. AEWA/MOP 5.39).

Future shape of CMS & Flyway Working Group

At CMS COP9, which took place in December 2008 in Rome, Italy, it was decided, through Resolution 9.12, to establish an *ad hoc* Working Group on the future shape of CMS. In addition to this working group, COP9 also agreed to establish an open-ended Scientific Council Working Group on flyways. For the future shape of CMS and particularly for the future of AEWA these two working groups are of great importance and therefore the Secretariat has participated in both. Their outcomes were tabled for discussion at CMS COP10 (Bergen, Norway, 20-25 November 2011). As a result of its relevant deliberations, COP10 adopted Resolution 10.9 *Future Structure and Strategies of the CMS and CMS Family*. A number of activities mentioned in the annexes to the resolution are addressed not only to CMS but also to CMS instruments. Of these, several are of direct relevance to AEWA. The relevance of the Future Shape of CMS to AEWA and contribution of AEWA to the implementation of the provisions of CMS 10.9 were discussed at MOP5.