



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

AEWA INTERNATIONAL SPECIES EXPERT GROUPS: DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

A total of 19 AEWA Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) have been produced to date and adopted by the MOP (between 2002 and 2012) as well as one Species Management Plan, the first of its kind, adopted by MOP5 in May 2012.

Of the 19 adopted SSAPs, international coordination mechanisms have been provided for eight of them – AEWA International Species Working Groups (ISWG) – whose Terms of Reference follow the generic ToR for AEWA ISWGs approved by TC9 in 2009, and coordinating organisations have been identified and Memoranda of Cooperation concluded with them by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. For the White-headed Duck SSAP a coordinator has been recruited, but the Working Group is yet to be convened.

The nine coordination mechanisms are at various stages of development and operation. Most advanced is the Lesser White-fronted Goose SSAP mechanism for which there is regular and sufficient funding from some of the range states, particularly Norway, and for which a full-time paid coordinator was recruited. The shortfalls of the other coordination mechanisms are usually associated with insufficient funding, out-posted part-time coordinators and the need of additional supervision and guidance by the Secretariat.

Due to limited resources, it has been prioritised that the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat shall establish international coordination mechanisms for SSAPs on globally threatened and near-threatened species as well as Species Management Plans (see Resolution 5.8). For two further SSAPs expert facilitation groups have been established, whereby the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has not been driving the process (Eurosite for Eurasian Spoonbill and the Irish Brent Goose Research Group for Light-bellied Brent Goose). These two cases present a useful approach and in future stakeholders working on non-globally threatened or non-near threatened species shall be encouraged to put such facilitation mechanisms in place. Such mechanisms are now needed for the AEWA Bewick's Swan SSAP and Greenland White-fronted Goose SSAP.

Generic Terms of Reference were adopted for AEWA SSAP International Species Working Groups at the 9th meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee (see Doc TC Inf. 11.4). Such Terms of Reference now need to be developed for facilitation groups on the implementation of action plans for non-globally threatened and non-near threatened species – currently termed AEWA International Species Expert Groups.

Action Requested from the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee is invited to review the attached draft generic ToR for AEWA International Species Expert Groups, make suggestions and amendments, as appropriate, and to approve the ToR for further use.

The approved ToR will be circulated to the existing coordination groups for the Eurasian Spoonbill SSAP and Light-bellied Brent Goose SSAP by the Secretariat, as well as the organisations interested in convening coordination mechanisms for the Bewick's Swan SSAP and the Greenland White-fronted Goose SSAP.

AEWA International Species Expert Group

Terms of Reference

Goal

(as defined in the International Single Species Action Plan for the [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME])

e.g. To maintain the [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] at its [YEAR] level (i.e. #,000 birds) in the long-term.

Indicator: Five year minimum of counts exceeds #,000 individuals.

Purpose

- e.g. Halt ongoing decline, and if necessary, begin recovery of the population to its [YEAR] level. *Indicator:* Average population size by [YEAR] exceeds ##,000 individuals (i.e. the [YEAR] levels).

Role

The role of the AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] International Expert Group will be to:

1. coordinate and catalyse the implementation of the AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] Single Species Action Plan (SSAP);
2. stimulate and support Range States in the implementation of the SSAP; and
3. monitor and report on the implementation and the effectiveness of the SSAP.

Remit

The AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] International Expert Group will:

- Develop an International Single Species Action Plan for the [SPECIES/POPULATION NAME] if not already developed, in liaison with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and in accordance with the AEWA Action Planning Guidelines and consistent with the agreed process;
- Set priorities for action and implement them (this step and later steps can happen while an SSAP is still under development or awaiting formal approval);
- Coordinate the overall international implementation;
- Raise funds for implementation;
- Assist Range States in producing national action plans;
- Ensure regular and thorough monitoring of the species populations;
- Stimulate and support scientific research in the species necessary for conservation;
- Promote the protection of the network of critical sites for the species;
- Facilitate internal and external communication and exchange of scientific, technical, legal and other required information, including with other specialists and interested parties;
- Assist with information in determination of the population size and trends of the species;
- Regularly monitor the effectiveness of implementation of the SSAP and take appropriate action according to the findings of this monitoring;
- Regularly report on the implementation of the SSAP to the AEWA Meeting of the Parties by submitting reports to the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat; and
- Revise the international SSAP by [DATE] and update it in [DATE] or as required.

Membership

- The AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] International Expert Group will be open to (1) representatives of Governmental bodies of all key Range States relevant to the implementation of AEWA, (2) representatives of national expert and conservation organisations from all key Range States, (3) representatives of international organisations, and (4) other experts as required.

Countries forming the International Expert Group
[LIST KEY RANGE STATES]

Officers

A full-time or part-time Coordinator post will ideally be based in an institution or an organisation, ideally from one of the major Range States. The Coordinator will be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the International Expert Group and shall act in close consultation with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

Meetings

The AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] International Expert Group should aim to hold face-to-face meetings once every three years. Other face-to-face meetings may be arranged as circumstances allow (e.g. back-to-back meetings with other international fora). Between meetings, business will be conducted electronically via the Expert Group's website and list server/intranet.

Reporting

A thorough report on the implementation of the SSAP will be produced according to a standard format with contributions from all Range States and submitted for inclusion into the general International Review on the Stage of Preparation and Implementation of Single Species Action Plans to the AEWA Meeting of the Parties. Reports shall also be prepared by each Range State to a format agreed by the Expert Group and presented at each face-to-face meeting of the Expert Group. Other reports will be produced as requested by the AEWA Technical Committee or the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat.

Financing

The operations of the AEWA [SPECIES / POPULATION NAME] International Expert Group, including the coordinator post, are to be financed by its members; funding for SSAP activities of the Expert Group or its members is to be sought from various sources.