



FOURTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE
CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS (AEWA)
12-13 MAY 2003, Tashkent, Uzbekistan

DRAFT PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR AEWA

INTRODUCTION

Already at the first session of the Meeting of the Parties, the Meeting recognized the need for the development of a Communication Strategy by adoption of Resolution 1.4 regarding the International Implementation Priorities (IIP) 2000-2004. The latter contained 33 priorities including the development of the Communication Strategy. Unfortunately until MOP2 the Secretariat was unable to secure the necessary funds to start this project. Therefore the project has been listed once more in the IIP 2003-2007.

The description of the projects as laid down in IIP 2003-2007 is as follows: *“A communication strategy for the Agreement should be developed as a priority. This should plan to communicate the objectives and requirements of the Agreement to appropriate targets audiences (decision-makers, conservation professionals, those living around or using key-sites, donors). The strategy will be most effective if it can facilitate communications activities at national and local level. Particularly attention will need to be given to disseminating materials in appropriate local languages, and at an appropriate level. A top priority will be to translate and disseminate the Conservation Guidelines in Arabic and Russian language versions. The strategy should result in a clear set of costed actions”.*

By the end of last year the UK decided to support the development of the Communication Strategy by providing the necessary funds for this. Since then the Secretariat tried to identify qualified experts with experiences in drafting a Communication Strategy for a Multilateral Environmental Agreement. It seems that there are not many of these experts on this field and that the ones that have been identified are not available at the moment.

Currently 3 consultants have been approached with the request to submit a quote to the Secretariat based on the description given-above.

PROPOSAL OF THE SECRETARIAT

The development of a Communication Strategy is also in the view of the Secretariat extremely important. If such a strategy would lead to a more effective way of communicating the objectives and requirements of the Agreement, this would have a very positive impact on achieving the goals set by the Meeting of the Parties and the Secretariat.

To ensure the most effective way of communication on AEWA is a shared responsibility of the MOP, Standing Committee, TC and the Secretariat. Therefore the Secretariat would like to involve the Technical Committee in this specific project. The first step would be to review the project proposal as attached hereto. The second step is that the Technical Committee should discuss which role the Committee should play in the further development and implementation of the Communication Strategy.

DRAFT PROPOSAL REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR AEWA.

Background

The African-Eurasian Water Bird Agreement (AEWA) is a spin-off from the Convention of Migratory Species and came into effect in 1999. In its International Implementation Priorities for 2003-2007, the AEWA Secretariat envisions to develop a communication strategy for the Agreement. The communication programme is intended to support the Secretariat in maximising the efficiency and sustaining the impact of its work. The Secretariat has expressed the need to increase the visibility and understanding of the Agreement among international stakeholders, wishing to increase the number of signatory parties and to strengthen the active participation and commitment of current contracting parties.

Communication and rising of awareness can help with:

- Identifying realistic policy and communication priorities;
- Strengthening networks;
- Developing strategies, methods and media to 'market' and communicate AEWA's conservation objectives to different target groups;
- Acquiring increased support from decision makers and stakeholders from AEWA countries, such as conservation professionals, those living around key sites and donors;
- Appealing to international donor organisations, existing programmes (GEF, WI), NGO's and secretariats of other international conventions for cooperation and support.

Approach -Preparatory phase

In an *inception meeting* with the Secretariat, the steps in the development of the strategy will be discussed and agreed upon. It will be decided which stakeholders will be consulted in preparation for the strategy. Strategic planning and policy documents that form the context in which the communication programme is to function; will be made available to the consultant.

An *assessment* of past and current communication efforts will be carried out, both within the Secretariat and between the Secretariat and the CMS, other international organisations and stakeholders. In this assessment the need and role of communication is assessed as well as the need for communication to support appropriate legal and economic policy instruments that are used or envisioned by the Agreement.

Subsequently, *consultations* with the Secretariat, and selected stakeholders (such as members of the technical committee, regional representatives, selected signatory Parties, potential Parties and Donors) will yield inputs to the direction and form the communication programme should take.

Approach - Strategy development

Based on the findings during the preparatory phase, a communication strategy will be *drafted* in close consultation with Secretariat staff. The strategy will be accompanied by and (annual) action plan and budget and will include advice on the organisation of communication and communication monitoring and evaluation aspects.

The strategy is to have a working document for the Secretariat and its partners. It is therefore important that these final users feel ownership to the strategy and understand and support the direction and decisions that have been made. To further tailor the strategy to their needs and expectations, the first draft will be presented to the Secretariat and selected participants during a small *workshop*, during which clarifications can be sought and adjustments can be made.

With the Secretariat's consent, the strategy will then be officially presented to the *Standing committee* in the 4th quarter of 2003.

Steps & Planning

Inception meeting & assessment in Bonn

- interviews with Secretariat and key experts
- decision contacts to be consulted
- agreement action plan preparation strategy
- assessment past and current communication efforts, needs and capacity
- drafting outline strategy

Consultations

- Design of interviews/consultations protocol
- Meetings Wetlands International (Coordinator GEF Project), LNV (Party)
- Telephone Interviews Key Players Region; incl. Interview design & analysis

Drafting of Strategy

- Writing from home base
- Draft will be send to AEWa Secretariat for comments
- Upon indication of the Secretariat, others will be asked for comments
- Incorporation of comments

Workshop

- PowerPoint presentation of draft strategy to a small, ad hoc working group consisting of Secretariat and selected participants
- Discussion of draft strategy; obtaining the group's consent
- Incorporation of comments
- Preparation of PowerPoint presentation

Presentation of communication strategy

- Presentation of strategy at Standing Committee meeting in Bonn (4th Quarter 2003)

Delivery of final strategy

- Incorporation of comments Standing Committee
- Delivery of final AEWa communication strategy and action plan within two weeks after the Standing Committee meeting.