



Secretariat provided by the United
Nations Environment Programme
(UNEP)

Agenda item: 8
Doc: AEWATC 5.6
09 February 2004
Original: English

FIFTH MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

30th March – 2nd April North Berwick near Edinburgh, Scotland

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Article VIII, paragraph h of the Agreement, the Secretariat shall prepare on an annual basis and for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, reports on the work of the Secretariat and on the implementation of the Agreement. In addition to this the Secretariat decided to report back to each meeting of the Technical or Standing Committee. It has been agreed by both Committees that a common report will be produced for both meetings. However it has also been agreed that for each meeting the report will be updated to reflect the actual situation. Depending on the time intervals between these meetings the report could be slightly different.

The current report describes the period since the 4th Meeting of the Technical Committee, which took place from 12-13 May 2003 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

OVERVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE AEWA SECRETARIAT

INTRODUCTION

Besides the day to day work consisting of responding to mail, maintenance of the AEWA network, dealing with administrative and financial matters, the Secretariat spent most of the period from May to November 2003 on finalisation of MOP2, closure of the previous financial triennium, starting up of new projects, recruitment of staff and considering the future move of the Secretariat to the UN campus. The latter is quite time consuming. Regular meetings of the Heads of Agencies take place to discuss issues of common interest with regard to the UN campus.

This report is divided into four parts:

1. General Matters: these include administrative/ financial, personnel, future premises, meetings, etc;
2. Information Management: this includes the Newsletter, website, etc;
3. Cooperation with other organisations;
4. Technical and/ or Scientific Matters: these include projects that are contracted out by the Secretariat and/ or projects carried out by others in which the Secretariat is strongly involved.

The day-to-day work will not be covered in this report.

1. GENERAL MATTERS

Future Premises for the Agreement Secretariat

In 2003 agreement was reached between the Government of Germany and the United Nations on the future UN campus in Bonn. This campus consists of two office buildings, being the Langen Eugen (LE) and Altes Hochhaus (AH). UNFCCC will be based in AH and all other agencies in LE.

Over the last few months the Secretariat negotiated on the room requirements taking into account the expected growth of the Agreement Secretariat in the near future. The outcome of this is that the 19th floor of the LE is designated for the Secretariat and for common meeting rooms. Following a visit to the premises the exact requirements per room were communicated to the German Government.

As mentioned in the previous report, a special task force of UN representatives has been established to oversee the development of the UN campus. The Executive Secretary of UNEP/ ASCOBANS represents CMS and the co-located Agreements in the task force. Final decisions are made by the Heads of Agencies. Therefore Heads of Agencies meet on a regular basis. As far as possible the Executive Secretary participated in these meetings. According to the latest information the move to this new UN campus will take place during the second half of 2005.

Meanwhile, CMS and the co-located Agreements are facing a lack of office space. Therefore a request has been forwarded to the Common Premises Unit to provide us in the short term with 10 additional offices. The problem is that no additional office space is available at our current premises, Haus Carstanjen.

The German Government has offered the required number of rooms in a building known as OBS, which is located two kilometres from the current premises. A discussion is taking place as to which part of CMS and/ or the Agreements should move to this building in the next few months. As said before, in 2005 all UN agencies will be located in LE and AH, this means that the move OBS is just to cover the period from May 2004 until the end of 2005.

Agreements' Unit

By the end of 2002 Mr Ephraim Kariuki (Kenian), an experienced Financial Assistant, was recruited on a temporary basis. He dedicated nearly 100 percent of his time to financial matters regarding the co-located Agreements. This has improved the performance of the Administrative Unit of CMS considerably. At the beginning of 2004 Ms Sandra Rucker, a (German) Junior Professional Officer (JPO) entered on duty. This

staff member, funded by the Government of Germany, will also dedicate part of her time to the co-located Agreements. It is expected that regarding the financial matters most of the problems we had in the past will be solved in the near future.

As mentioned in the previous report, UNON has reviewed the administrative support for outposted offices. As a general rule an Admin Unit of an outposted, medium-sized office, which is the case for CMS and the co-located Agreements, should have five staff members, being 1 Administrative and Fund Management Officer, 2 Financial Assistants and 2 Administrative Assistants to execute all duties assigned to them. The Deputy Director agreed that OTL¹ funds might be used to cover the salary costs of three additional staff, being 1 Financial Assistant and 2 Administrative Assistants, for this Unit. The recruitment process has started to fill these vacancies in due course. Hopefully these officers will enter on duty some time during the second half of 2004 and by then the Unit will be fully staffed. From then onwards it might be expected that all problems will be solved.

Recruitment of Staff

Last year was a very busy year for the Agreement Secretariat. This situation will not change in 2004 due to the fact that AEWA becomes more and more well-known, which leads to more requests for information, for support, etc. One of the priorities of the Secretariat is to finalise the MOP2 documents. To enable the Secretariat to do this but also to draft newsletters, to prepare meetings and workshops, some temporary staff were recruited on a consultancy basis. In addition a number of interns joined the Secretariat.

Fixed-term Staff members

Since MOP2, the revised job description of the post of Executive Secretary has been reclassified. As expected, this post meets the criteria for the P-4 level. Unfortunately, new Staff Rules have been adopted by the General Assembly and as agreed by the Director of UNEP these are also applicable for UNEP Staff members as of the end of 2002. According to these new Rules all posts that are upgraded have to be re-advertised. This means that the Executive Secretary, Mr Bert Lenten (Dutch) had to re-apply for his own position. The deadline for applications was 23 December 2003.

On 9 July 2003 Ms Marie-Therese Kämper (German) received a short-term contract until 8 June 2004. Ms Kämper replaced Ms Mirna Maya, who was Secretary/ Assistant for 2 ½ years and decided to leave the Secretariat for personal reasons.

As agreed by MOP2, the post of Secretary/ Assistant should be reclassified. On 29 September 2003 a Staff member of UNON informed the Executive Secretary that the post has been reclassified and merits the level of G-5. On 21 January 2004 the post was announced on the UN website: <http://jobs.un.org>; deadline for applications is 21 February 2004.

In mid 2003 the process was started to recruit the Associated Technical Officer, who should enter on duty as agreed by MOP2 on 1 July 2004. The deadline for applications for this post was 23 December 2003. The interviews will take place at the end of February 2004.

Junior Professional Officer

In 2002 a request for a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) was submitted to the Deputy Executive Director (DED) of UNEP. The DED coordinates and prioritises all requests from UNEP and UNEP administered Conventions and Agreements. Unfortunately the JPO request of the Agreement Secretariat was not selected by the DED as a priority. This means that the AEWA request is not communicated to the donors. So far it is not fully clear which criteria are used for the decision of the DED to grant priority to a certain JPO request.

1. OTL stands for Overhead Trust Ledger, which is the 13 % that is deducted by UNEP from all expenses made from the AEWA Budget.

Similar to last year again a request has been submitted to the DED for a JPO for information management. This person will work part-time for the Agreement and part-time for the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project and as such being an important part of the matching funds needed for this project. It is hoped that one of the Donor countries would be willing to support this position.

Consultants

Mr. Dirk Hendricks (German), a former intern and consultant of CMS, was contracted to develop a new AEWA exhibition. This exhibition is based on the common exhibition that he prepared for CMS and its Agreements. Besides this he serviced the TC meeting by writing the minutes. He worked for AEWA from 14 April to 8 August 2003.

On 1 October Ms. Yuki Itakura (Japanese), former intern of ASCOBANS, was contracted to assist Ms. Kämper with formatting of some MOP2 documents.. As of 1 January 2004 she is working both for the ASCOBANS Secretariat and the AEWA Secretariat. Her contract will expire on 1 April 2004

Interns

Mr Doru Leonard Irimie (Romanian) worked for the Secretariat from 28 July until 26 September 2003. His main task was to compile the ninth issue of the AEWA Newsletter.

Ms Andrea Rechel (German) started to work for the co-located Agreements Secretariats as of 1 October 2003 and her internship expires on 31 March 2004. She is particularly involved in financial matter e.g. preparations of contracts.

Ms Bianca Bauch (German) joined the Secretariat on 5 January and will stay until 30 June 2004. She is supporting the Secretariat in the day-to-day work.

Finalization of MOP2

During 2003 most of the financial matters regarding MOP2 were finalised. A lot of work has been done and is still on going on finalisation of the following MOP2 documents:

- Action Plan for the Great Snipe
- Action Plan for the Black-winged Pratincole
- Action Plan for the Sociable Plover
- Guideline on National Legislation
- Guideline on avoidance of introduction of invasive species
- AEWA Action Plan 2003-2005
- International Implementation Plan 2003-2007

Some of these documents are more or less ready to be printed. As soon as funds are secured printing can take place.

TC meetings

After the successful 4th Meeting of the TC, 11-13 May 2003 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, steps were undertaken to prepare the 5th Meeting of the TC. The latter is organised back-to-back with the Global Flyway Conference, which will take place from 3-8 April 2004 in Edinburgh, UK. Our counterpart has made all the necessary logistical arrangements in close consultation with the Secretariat.

Standing Committee Meeting

From 24-25 November 2003 the 1st Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee took place in Bonn, Germany. In the development of the Agreement the establishment of this Committee is seen as a milestone and a necessity. The minutes of this meeting can be found on the AEWA website or in document TC/ Inf. 5.3.

Dark-bellied Brent Goose Working group

After the working group amended the 4th draft of the Action Plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose, substantial comments were received from some of the key-countries or organisations involved. Therefore the third meeting of the Dark-bellied Brent Goose Working Group was convened and took place on 14 January 2004 in Wageningen, The Netherlands. The whole Action Plan was reviewed again and comments received were discussed and where appropriate the text was amended. The 6th draft will be submitted to the Range States and organisations involved in the species and at the same time to the TC. Hopefully by the end of 2004 the Standing Committee will be in the position to adopt this Action Plan in accordance with Recommendation 2.1. of MOP2.

Light-bellied Brent Goose Action Plan

In early October 2003 the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) and Queens University Belfast organised an International Workshop at Castle Espie (Northern Ireland) to discuss the production of an International Species Action Plan for the East Canadian High Arctic Light-bellied Brent Goose. The Executive Secretary participated in this meeting and offered to facilitate the work of WWT. By the end of the meeting it was agreed to develop this Action Plan under the framework of AEWA and to establish a working group linked to the TC.

Northern Bald Ibis Workshop

From 8-11 January 2004 a Species Action Plan Stakeholder Workshop on the Northern Bald Ibis took place in Madrid, Spain. This Workshop, funded by AEWA, was organised by the SEO, the BirdLife Partner in Spain. The aim of the Workshop was to collect all existing information/ views on the species needed to draft an International Species Action Plan. Later this year the first draft will be circulated for comments and the final draft will be submitted to MOP3 for formal adoption.

Second Workshop on Non-Toxic Shot

It was scheduled to organise a 2nd Workshop on Non-Toxic Shot somewhere near the end of 2003 in Italy for southern European countries. At an early stage contact was made with the President of ILL Nibbio, an Italian NGO, who has good contacts with international and national hunters' organisations. So far no progress has been made.

Workshop on Sustainable Hunting

In 2002 representatives of Office National de la Chasse et Faune Sauvage (ONCFS) approached the Secretariat regarding a Workshop on Sustainable Hunting in Western Africa. Since then agreement has been reached with ONCFS, Wetlands International and the Agreement Secretariat that this workshop will be organised under the umbrella of AEWA and in close cooperation with OMPO and CIC. This workshop is scheduled to take place late in 2004.

Workshop on promoting AEWA in the Russian Federation

MOP2 adopted the possibility to pay the annual contribution in kind in lieu of cash. This provision has been made to allow countries that are currently in a difficult economic situation to join the Agreement. One of the countries that might be interested in this provision could be the Russian Federation. The annual contribution is one of the bottlenecks clearly indicated by the Russian Federation to join any Convention and/ or Agreement. Now this problem has been tackled it might be worthwhile to restart the discussion with the authorities of the Russian Federation on accession to AEWA. Steps are being undertaken to organise a workshop some time during 2004 to promote the Agreement and to encourage the Russian authorities to join AEWA.

2. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Communication Strategy

At the 1st Meeting of the Standing Committee, SPAN Consultants presented the result of the quick scan (see doc. TC/ Inf. 5.4.). The results of the quick scan will be used in the further development of the Communication Strategy for the Agreement.

The following paragraphs will provide some more information on existing activities on exchange of information.

Newsletters

Mr Doru Leonard Irimie compiled the 9th issue of the regular AEWA Newsletter. Early in 2004 this newsletter was published and mailed to more than 1700 addressees.,

Common Exhibition/ AEWA Exhibition

In close cooperation with CMS, EUROBATS, ASCOBANS and ACCOBAMS, a common exhibition has been developed on CMS and its Agreements. This exhibition was launched at the COP7/ MOP2.

In the common exhibition there was limited space to address all aspects of AEWA. Taking into account that the existing AEWA exhibition dates back to the end of 1995 and is completely out of date, there was a need to develop a new one. The development of this exhibition took place in close cooperation with the designer of the common exhibition. Although the exhibition panels have already been printed, the official launch will not be until the Global Flyway Conference in 2004.

Website

The update of the Agreement's website is partly contracted out to UNEP-WCMC (particular updating species database and maps/graphics) and partly done by the Secretariat.

In August 2003 Ms Marie-Therese Kämper followed a course to make her familiar with 'Dreamweaver'. This is the software used to update websites. Since then she and also the Executive Secretary have been updating the information on the website. However, feedback received showed that there is a need to improve the accessibility of the information. The Secretariat is currently looking for a webmaster who, in close cooperation with the Secretariat, could re-arrange the information on the website.

DVD/ AEWA Film

On 15 January 2004 the consortium working on the development of the AEWA DVD presented the first results of their work. Particularly the footages shot in Namibia in 2003 are very interesting, showing clearly the pressure of human activities on migratory waterbirds. The launch of the DVD is foreseen to take place at the Global Flyway Conference later this year. As in 2003 the German Government is willing to support the further development of the DVD by allocating their annual voluntary contribution for 2004 to this.

3. COOPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Joint work programme with Ramsar Secretariat

For some years CMS drafted a Joint Work Programme (JWP) between the RAMSAR Secretariat and CMS. Although both organisations were in favour of the JWP, it has never been finalized because the people involved from CMS as well as from the RAMSAR Secretariat left office.

AEWA is fully complementary to the RAMSAR Convention, however there is also some overlap. To

avoid any duplication or to mutually enhance their activities there is a need to synchronize our work plans. Therefore the AEWA Secretariat, in close cooperation with CMS, updated the existing draft JWP incorporating specific AEWA issues.

In 2002 the final draft was submitted as a document to MOP2, COP7 CMS and COP8 Ramsar. Since then some amendments have been made. Due to the workload in the Ramsar Secretariat, CMS and AEWA not much progress was made in 2003. Luckily agreement was reached by the end of January 2004 and formal signing of the JWP is scheduled to take place during the Global Flyway Conference later this year.

Joint Work programme with UNCCD

CMS initiated to identify possibilities for future cooperation between CMS and UNCCD. More or less from the beginning the AEWA Secretariat has been involved in this. The Secretariat participated in a number of meetings and provided comments on drafts of the Memorandum of Understanding between CMS, UNCCD and JWP. The discussion is still going on and one of the questions is if AEWA should be in a similar way involved as in the JWP with Ramsar and Wetlands International.

OMPO

An official visit was paid in January 2003 together with Mr. Herby Kalchreuter (CIC representative in the TC) to the OMPO Headquarters in Paris. During this meeting we tried to identify issues of common interest and possibilities for future cooperation. The Standing Committee approved strengthening the cooperation with OMPO. This will be followed up during 2004 by the Secretariat.

4. PROJECTS

African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project

The project brief for the full-size project was submitted to the GEF Secretariat in October 2003. At the GEF Council meeting, which took place from 19-21 November 2003 in Washington, USA, the project was approved. Steps are now being taken by Wetlands International to start the implementation of this project as soon as possible. The approval of the project is also a milestone for the Agreement. Both the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and AEWA will benefit greatly from the implementation of this project.

International Implementation Priorities 2004-2007²

The AEWA Secretariat plays an active role in the implementation of the International Implementation Priorities. One of the tasks of the Secretariat is to seek and whenever possible to secure necessary funds to implement some of the projects. Unfortunately 2003 was not the best year for fundraising. The economic recession has had an impact on voluntary contributions to the Agreement due to the fact that most of the Ministries of industrialized countries are faced with budget cuts. In 2003 and so far in 2004 funds have been secured for the following projects:

- IIP 2003-2007
 - Project 1 : Meeting of the Dark-bellied Brent Goose Working group;
 - Project 2 : Development of a International Species Action Plan for the Ferruginous Duck;
 - Project 10: Organisation of a non-toxic shot workshop in Italy;
 - Project 17: Publishing of the Wader Atlas;
 - Project 20: Coordination of waterbird ringing schemes, particularly in Africa;
 - Project 29: Flyway population catalogue (or register);
 - Project 34: Development of a density-dependent population model for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose (partly);
 - Project 31: Drafting of a communication strategy.

² MOP2 adopted the International Implementation Priorities 2004-2007 (IIP 2004-2007). Until then the IIP 2000-2004 was in force; part of the project mentioned above originated from IIP 2000-2004 and part from the new IIP.

- Development of information materials;
- Development of DVD;
- Publication of the results of the African Waterbird Census 1991-2001.

In addition to this list some leftover funds from the previous triennium have been allocated³ to the following projects:

- IIP 2003-2007
 - Project 2: Development of International Action Plan for the Bald Ibis;
 - Project 19: Pilot study/ review of potential from waterbird ringing recoveries for the Agreement area;
- Global Flyway Conference

The Standing Committee agreed at their first meeting to allocate funds for 2004 accrued from contributions of new Parties to the following projects in accordance with Resolution 2.7:

- Consultancies regarding research/ surveys (US \$ 25,000)
- Development of International Species Action Plans (US \$ 30,000)
- Development of information material (US \$ 20,000)

A detailed description on the current situation regarding implementation of all IIP 2003-2007 projects can be found in document TC 5.14

³ As approved by the Chair of the Technical Committee, having the mandate to approve any budget revision during the first triennium on behalf of the MOP.