



9th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE
20 - 23 April 2009, Zagreb, Croatia

**DRAFT GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR WORKING GROUPS TO
COORDINATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SSAPs**

INTRODUCTION

In its Resolution 3.12, operational paragraph 6, the Meeting of the Parties instructed the Secretariat “... to establish mechanisms, resources permitting, to co-ordinate the international implementation of existing and future Single Species Action Plans ...”

Since 2005, the AEWA Secretariat has commenced support for the operations of international (expert) working groups for several species with SSAPs – the Red-breasted Goose, the Sociable Lapwing and the Black-winged Pratincole, for which full-time coordinators were based in Romania and Kazakhstan; later a coordinator was recruited at the Secretariat to deal with the finalisation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose SSAP and its coordination of implementation. A working group for the Lesser White-fronted Goose is yet to be convened. An agreement was reached between the Secretariat and BirdLife International over the coordination of the SSAP for the Northern Bald Ibis and a mechanism will be soon be established.

This model of international coordination of SSAP-implementation proved to be a move in the right direction, but at the same time some drawbacks were revealed. The Technical Committee’s endorsement of Terms of Reference (ToR) for species working groups in order to provide a clear framework for their operations was identified as a major necessity. To fill this gap, the Secretariat drafted ToR for the White-headed Duck Working Group (proposed as a generic format for ToR), which was discussed at the 7th TC meeting at the end of 2006. The TC did not take a decision on the presented draft and recommended further development.

In 2008, the AEWA international review on the stage of preparation and implementation of SSAPs (as required by paragraph 7.4e of the AEWA Action Plan) was produced. Recommendations from this review were attached and approved as Annex II (*Recommended best-practice in the implementation and reporting of Single Species Action Plans*) to Resolution 4.4. The ToR drafted in 2006 were redrafted by the Secretariat, using Resolution 4.4 and its Annex II, and the new version is appended below.

ACTIONS REQUESTED FROM THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

The Technical Committee is invited to review the attached draft generic ToR for AEWA Species Working Groups, make suggestions and amendments, as appropriate, and to approve the ToR for further use as a model for ToR to be adjusted by the Secretariat, as necessary.

On the basis of these ToR the existing expert working groups shall extend their membership, scope and operations so as to meet the requisites for AEWA Species Working Groups.

The AEWA Secretariat will formalise the relationship between each Species Working Group and the Agreement through signing a Memorandum of Cooperation with the institution/organisation providing the coordinator; a group-specific ToR (adjusted generic model ToR) will be appended to each MoC. This MoC will clarify the roles and responsibilities of the institutions/organisations providing/hosting coordinators for AEWA Species Working Groups. In order to establish Species Working Groups for AEWA SSAPs, which do not, as yet have coordination mechanisms, the AEWA Secretariat will actively seek to identify potential providers of coordinators with which an MoC could be concluded. Whenever the AEWA Secretariat contributes funding towards the coordination of a Species Working Group, the MoC will be complemented by a binding agreement.

AEWA Species Working Group

Terms of Reference

(Draft)

Goals *[usually as per the SSAP, see four example bullet points]*

- To restore the species populations to a favourable conservation status.
- To move the species population(s) from Column A to Column B or C of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan.
- To remove the species from the IUCN Red List of threatened animals.
- In the short-term, to maintain the current population size and distribution of the species throughout its range, and in the medium to long term to promote increase in population size and range.

Role

The role of the AEWA Species Working Group will be to:

- 1) coordinate and catalyse the implementation of the International Single Species Action Plan (SSAP) approved by the AEWA Meeting of the Parties;
- 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 Working Group will:

- set priorities for action and implement them;
- 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;
- assist with information in determination of the red list status and 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 through the National Focal Points; and
- update the international SSAP in *[year when the SSAP is due for revision]* or as required.

Membership

The AEWA Species Working Group will comprise (1) designated representatives of national state authorities in charge of the implementation of AEWA and (2) representatives of national expert and conservation organisations as invited to the national delegations by the state authorities from all major Range States.

Countries regularly supporting the species: *[list of the core Range States as per the SSAP]*

The Chair of the AEWA Species Working Group may invite and admit international expert and conservation organisations as well as individual experts as observers to the Species Working Group, as necessary.

Officers

A Chairperson of the Species Working Group will be elected amongst its members.

A full-time or part-time Coordinator post will be based in an institution or an organization, ideally from one of the major Range States. The Coordinator will be in charge of the day-to-day operations of the Species Working Group and shall act in close cooperation with the Chairperson and the AEWA Secretariat.

The designated representatives of national state authorities will act as National Focal Points for the SSAP and will be the main contact persons for the Chairperson and the Coordinator.

Meetings

The Species Working 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 Species Working Group's website and list server.

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 Species Working Group and presented at each face-to-face meeting of the Species Working Group. Other reports will be produced as required by the AEWA Technical Committee or the AEWA Secretariat.

Financing

The operations of the Species Working Group, including the coordinator post, are to be financed primarily by its members and, if applicable, by its observers; the AEWA Secretariat cannot commit regular financial support and may only provide such if possible. Funding for SSAP activities of the Species Working Group or its members is to be sought from various sources.