

REPORT OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

Introduction

1. The first session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) was held at the Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset West, Cape Town, South Africa, from 6 to 9 November 1999 at the invitation of the Government of South Africa.

I. OPENING OF THE SESSION AND OPENING STATEMENTS

2. The joint opening of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and the first Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds took place at the Lord Charles Hotel, Somerset West, Cape Town, South Africa, at 4.30 p.m. on Saturday, 6 November 1999.

3. Opening statements were made by Mr. Pieter Botha, Deputy Director for Species Conservation, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa; Mr Mohammed Valli Moosa, Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism of South Africa; Ms. Geke Faber, State Secretary for Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands; Ms. Gila Altmann, Parliamentary State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety of Germany; Mr. Kas Hamman, Director of Environment of the Western Cape Provincial Government; Mr. Dave Pritchard, of BirdLife International; Mr. Alwyn Nel, Senior Manager of Philatelic Services of the South African Post Office; and Mr. Klaus Töpfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

4. Mr. Botha welcomed all participants, noting that more than 250 delegates from some 100 countries would be attending the AEWA and CMS meetings. The large number of observers from non-Party countries was also encouraging, since he believed that they would in due course become full members within the group of countries involved in the activities of CMS. The current meeting marked the first time since 1985 that a CMS Party had hosted a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He considered it very appropriate that the meeting was taking place at the southernmost tip of Africa, at the end of the flyway of a large number of migratory birds, and with significant migratory populations of marine mammals.

5. Mr. Valli Moosa, welcoming all participants and officially opening the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS, said that South Africa's location on the migratory routes of many birds and marine mammals gave it an important role in their conservation and made it an ideal venue to celebrate these two milestones in the history of the Convention.

6. South Africa, he said, was one of the few countries that had anchored the environmental rights of its citizens within the Constitution. Great interest had been aroused by the country's recently issued 700-page report on the state of the environment, which contained highly detailed environmental information, including both good and bad news, thereby fulfilling South Africa's constitutional and international obligations for the provision of information. The report could be accessed on the Internet and he was happy to present a CD-ROM version of the report to the Executive Director of UNEP.

7. Drawing attention to recent agreements between South Africa and neighbouring countries on the formation of transfrontier conservation areas, including some of the biggest in the world, he said that such agreements recognised that ecosystems transcended national boundaries and that there was a need for

transborder co-operation in the conservation and management of the shared natural resource for the benefit of the people of the region.

8. Ms. Faber thanked and congratulated the Government of South Africa for hosting the first session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA, which would serve as an exemplary agreement for the preservation of nature and would also allow for practical implementation of CMS. Because the efforts for the conservation of waterbirds would have a positive effect in many other fields, AEWA could be an important step in the development of an integrated strategy for sustainable development.

9. With regard to the important issue of the sustainable use of waterbirds, AEWA could play a key role in collecting and distributing information about the hunting of waterbirds. It could provide funds for protection programmes, training and education. The Netherlands was implementing a major project with Mali and other West African countries to promote sustainable use.

10. The agenda also contained an item on the secretariat of AEWA. For four years, the Netherlands had financed and housed the interim secretariat of AEWA. The Netherlands supported the idea of co-locating the secretariats of international agreements for reasons of efficiency and because it encouraged mutual policy development and gave the agreements more international clout. It therefore supported moving the AEWA secretariat to Bonn, where it could be housed in the Agreement Unit of CMS.

11. With regard to a third significant item on the agenda, the joint implementation of AEWA, she said that, by joining forces with other international organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and UNEP, AEWA could be transformed into a model agreement, which could have relevance for other fields as well. With those remarks, she officially opened the first Meeting of the Parties to AEWA.

12. Ms. Altmann, on behalf of the German Environment Minister Jürgen Trittin, said it was a pleasure to address representatives from countries and international organizations that were committed to conserving migratory species and, in particular, migratory waterbirds.

13. On the agenda of AEWA was the establishment of a permanent secretariat, in accordance with article VI, paragraph 7, within the framework of the CMS secretariat. That would mean that the interim secretariat, which to date had been provided and funded by the Government of the Netherlands, would move from the Hague to Bonn. As Bonn already housed the CMS secretariat, and other Agreement secretariats, such as those of the Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe (EUROBATS) and the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS), the Convention and the Agreements would benefit from a host of synergetic effects. On behalf of the German Government, she gave the assurance that Germany would do everything to provide the AEWA secretariat with optimum start-up and adequate working conditions. Germany had already submitted an offer to the Government of the Netherlands.

14. The success of AEWA and CMS depended on the Parties' or signatories' abilities to fulfil their commitments and, for many countries, that was a financial and capacity issue. Germany wished to make an additional annual contribution for projects or events of the secretariat, to support the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the Agreement area.

15. Turning to CMS, she observed that the Convention had held its twentieth anniversary in 1999 and, to mark that occasion, the German Minister for the Environment, Mr. Jürgen Trittin, had hosted an anniversary ceremony in Bonn. Germany's conclusion, after 20 years, was that CMS had passed the test

and had a future. The Convention on Biological Diversity supported CMS, it did not replace it. Germany recommended, however, that funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) should also be made available for CMS projects.

16. In 1979, 22 States had signed CMS in Bonn. The fact that more than 60 Parties were expected at the current Conference of the Parties was an encouraging development, but it was not enough. Many regions were not yet adequately represented and some large range States were not yet Parties. Some participated in the work under regional agreements or memorandums of understanding, without being Parties to CMS. Accordingly, Germany would continue its efforts to promote the Convention.

17. As an illustration of the great significance that Germany attached to CMS and AEWA, on behalf of her Government she extended its offer to host the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS and the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA in Bonn in late 2002 or early 2003.

18. Mr. Hamman, speaking on behalf of the government of the Western Cape Province and the organization Cape Nature Conservation, welcomed participants to the Western Cape, which was one of the world's six plant kingdoms, hosting more than 10,000 endemic species of plants and animals and also offering a large number of waterbird habitats. The Western Cape was also the site of South Africa's first biosphere reserve and had a large number of conservation areas, including conservancies, which, he said, represented a successful management tool, involving people on the ground in a self-regulatory mechanism. Looking forward to the forthcoming deliberations, he wished the participants in both bodies successful meetings.

19. Mr. Nel introduced the new issue of South African stamps featuring migratory species and presented commemorative sets of the stamps to Ms. Faber, representing the Netherlands Government, and Mr. Moosa, representing the South African Government. It was hoped that the stamp issue would help to raise public awareness of the species and would serve to illustrate the commitment of the South African Post Office to serving the goals of environmental conservation.

20. Mr. Pritchard, speaking on behalf of the non-governmental organizations present at the two meetings, in particular the four international conservation non-governmental organizations, BirdLife International, the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Wetlands International and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), stressed the need for more signatures and ratifications of the Convention and its various Agreements, especially in areas where there were significant gaps in coverage.

21. Expressing his appreciation for the access granted by the Convention and agreements to non-governmental interests, he welcomed the draft proposal before the CMS Conference of the Parties on permanent observer status in the Scientific Council for certain non-governmental organizations, and hoped that a similar move would be considered by the future AEWA technical committee.

22. He drew attention to the importance of enhanced synergy and integration among the various biodiversity-related conventions, including at the national level, and the need for effective implementation. In that connection, he pledged the support of the conservation non-governmental organizations for the proposals to add new species to the appendices; to encourage measures to combat by-catch; and for an Agreement on albatrosses.

23. In conclusion, he said that the partnership between Governments and non-governmental organizations represented at the current meetings offered a valuable opportunity for progress in addressing the urgent issues facing AEWA and CMS.

24. Mr. Töpfer drew attention to the close integration of biodiversity-related issues with those of other social parameters, such as linguistic and cultural diversity, and noted that, where diversity was reduced, instability increased. Accordingly, in the globalizing world, it was essential to be aware of and to safeguard regional identity and diversity in all their aspects. To succeed, efforts to promote conservation

of species, as exemplified by the current meeting, must be integrated into an enabling context, linked with efforts to reduce poverty. The recently launched GEO-2000 report identified two primary reasons for the environmental problems facing the world: the poverty of the majority of the world's population and the lifestyle and consumption patterns of a minority. It was essential to build a bridge between the poor and the rich, if the world's migratory species of wild animals-the "travellers without passports" in the phrase of the Secretary General of the United Nations-were to be protected.

25. To mark the holding of the two meetings, a message had been sent from Europe to Mr. Thabo Mbeki, President of South Africa, borne by four migratory eagles, whose passage over Africa was being tracked by satellite telemetry. The birds had left their breeding area in September 1999 and were currently nearing the northern frontier of South Africa. The message read:

“This eagle connects ecosystems of Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Migratory animals are paramount symbols of our common natural heritage.”

26. He stressed the need for intensified international efforts, such as the current meetings, to help protect and conserve the world's migratory species. In that context, he reaffirmed the support of UNEP, including for the implementation of CMS work programmes and in the submission of projects for GEF funding, and noted that a four-country project for the conservation of globally significant wetlands and migration corridors required by Siberian cranes and other migratory waterbirds in Asia had recently achieved GEF approval for funding. He looked forward to strengthened synergies between the work programmes of UNEP and CMS.

27. In conclusion, he commended the CMS secretariat on its organization of a young people's art competition on the theme of migratory species and congratulated its winner, Mechthild Meyer, who was a special guest at the opening ceremony. That competition and its winning entry, whose imagery captured the interaction between migratory species and the responsibility of all countries to protect and nurture those species, represented a wonderful example of co-operation and integration.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

28. Pending the election of officers, Mr. Müller-Helmbrecht, Executive Secretary of CMS, took the chair.

A. Adoption of the rules of procedure

29. Introducing document AEWA/MOP1.4 on the draft rules of procedure for the meetings of the AEWA Contracting Parties, the Acting Chair said that the draft rules had been prepared following the lead of the Convention on Wetlands, (Ramsar, 1971) for which similar rules of procedure had proved to be very efficient and he did not expect major concerns to be expressed in their regard. He proposed, and it was agreed by the Meeting, that the draft rules of procedure be adopted, with the proviso that some appropriate editorial revisions would be carried out by the Meeting Committee.

30. At the last session of the plenary, on Tuesday, 9 November 1999, it was proposed by the interim secretariat that rule 30 of the rules of procedure, as contained in document AEWA/MOP1.4, be amended to provide for a quorum for the Meetings of the Parties to be constituted by at least one half of the Parties to the Agreement, rather than two thirds, so that the rule would read:

“The President may declare a session of the meeting open and permit the debate to proceed if at least one half of the Parties to the Agreement are present, and may take a decision when representatives of at least one half of the Parties are present.”

31. In the ensuing discussion, the Executive Secretary of CMS confirmed that the proposed amendment would be in line with the CMS rules of procedure. The Meeting adopted the proposed amendment by consensus.

B. Attendance

32. The following Contracting Parties to the Agreement attended the session: Benin, Congo, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Gambia, Germany, Guinea, Mali, Monaco, Netherlands, Niger, Romania, Senegal, South Africa, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania.

33. The following States not Party to the Agreement were represented by observers: Algeria, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, European Community, France, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, Ireland, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Latvia, Malawi, Mauritius, Moldova, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Sao Tome and Principe, Slovakia, Sri Lanka, Tunisia, Ukraine, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

34. Observers from the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and convention secretariats were also present: British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC UK); Bird Conservation Union Russia; BirdLife International; BirdLife International/CCAMLR; BirdLife South Africa; CIC-Migratory Bird Commission; CMS Scientific Council; Convention on Wetlands of International Importance; German Hunters' Association (DJV); Agreement on the Conservation of Bats in Europe (EUROBATS); Fédération des Associations des Chasseurs de l'Union (FACE); Globe Southern Africa; Ligue Française pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO France); Noah's Ark Centre for the Recovery of Endangered species (NACRES); National Museum Kenya; Nature Protection Society Congo; Nordic Hunters' Association; Oiseaux Migrateurs du Paléarctique Occidental (OMPO); Ornithological Society of Ukraine; Tour du Valat France; United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); Secretariat of the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals; Union Nationale des Fédérations Départementales de Chasseurs (Union FDC France); University of Cape Town; World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC); Wetlands International-Africa, Europe; Middle East (AEME); Wetlands International Asia Pacific; World Wide Fund for Nature Southern Africa Regional Office (WWF SARO); Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT UK).

C. Election of officers

35. The following officers were elected by acclamation:

Chair: Mr. Mbareck Diop (Senegal)

Vice-Chair: Mr. F.H.J. von der Assen (Netherlands)

36. On taking the chair, Mr. Diop said that the present Agreement was one of the most important agreements under CMS because of the number of countries and the number of species involved. The thanks of the Contracting Parties should be conveyed to the Netherlands Government for having provided the interim secretariat for the Agreement for four years, and for all the work and support it had provided. He also thanked the South African Government for hosting the first session, and UNEP and CMS for their help and support to the Agreement.

D. Adoption of the agenda and work programme

1. *Adoption of the agenda*

37. The Meeting adopted the following agenda, on the basis of the provisional agenda contained in document AEWA/MOP1.1/Rev.1:

1. Opening.
2. Welcome addresses.
3. Adoption of the rules of procedure.
4. Election of officers.
5. Adoption of the agenda and work programme.
6. Establishment of the Credentials Committee and sessional committees.
7. Admission of observers.
8. Opening statements.
9. Reports by:
 - (a) Secretariat;
 - (b) Depositary.
10. Report of the Credentials Committee.
11. Adoption of amendments to the Agreement and Annexes.
12. Adoption of the Conservation Guidelines
13. International implementation of the Agreement:
 - (a) Adoption of the International Implementation Priorities 2000-2004;
 - (b) Establishment of a register for international projects.
14. Institutional arrangements:
 - (a) Establishment of the Agreement secretariat;
 - (b) Establishment of the Technical Committee.
15. Financial arrangements:
 - (a) Adoption of the budget for the period 2000-2002;
 - (b) Consideration of accepting contributions in kind;
 - (c) Establishment of a conservation fund.

16. Adoption of a format for reports of the Parties.
17. Presentation of the logo for the Agreement.
18. Adoption of the Brent Goose Management Plan.
19. Reports of sessional committees.
20. Date and venue of the second session of the Meeting of the Parties.
21. Other business.
22. Adoption of the report of the meeting.
23. Closure of the meeting

2. Work programme

38. The representative of the interim secretariat presented the work programme for the session. He said that, while the working procedure would be to cover most issues in the plenary, two working groups would still be needed, one on financial and administrative issues to be attended by Parties to the agreement and one to deal with substantive matters, on technical and biological issues, which would be open to all participants, including observers.

E. Establishment of the Credentials Committee and sessional committees

39. The Credentials Committee comprised representatives from Germany (Chair), Gambia, Monaco, Netherlands and United Republic of Tanzania.

40. The meeting decided to establish two sessional committees: a financial and administrative working group, co-ordinated by Mr. F.H.J. von der Assen (Netherlands), and a technical working group, co-ordinated by Mr. David Stroud (United Kingdom).

III. REPORTS

A. Report of the secretariat

41. At the invitation of the Chair, the representatives of the interim secretariat gave brief accounts of the work of that secretariat over the years 1996 to 1999, and introduced document reference number AEW/MOP.1.5, containing a complete report of the secretariat's work for that period. It was recalled that the Agreement was to enter into force only after seven European Parties and seven African Parties had signed and ratified the Agreement; that had been achieved by the end of August 1999 and the Agreement had entered into force on 1 November 1999.

42. In connection with the list of Parties shown in a table in the report, the representative of France said that although her country had signed the Agreement, it had not yet ratified it, so France was not yet a Party to the Agreement. Several representatives and the Chair expressed thanks to the interim secretariat and the Government of the Netherlands on behalf of the Meeting, and the representative of Monaco said that a resolution should be framed to convey that sentiment formally.

B. Depositary

43. Mr. Jan Willem Sneep (Netherlands), as the representative of the Depositary, reported on the work of the Depositary. He confirmed that the Agreement had entered into force on 1 November 1999 for States that had been Parties on 31 August 1999. After 1 November 1999 it was no longer possible to become a signatory to the Agreement, and States could become Parties only by depositing instruments of accessio with the Depositary. He noted that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia had become the first Party to accede to the Agreement after 1 November 1999. On behalf of the Depositary, he thanked all the States involved.

IV. REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

44. Mr. G. Emonds (Germany), the Chair of the Credentials Committee, reported for the plenary at its last meeting on Tuesday 9 November 1999, that the credentials of 15 States had been accepted by his Committee, and that therefore, in the light of amended rule 30 of the rules of procedure, a quorum was present at the session.

45. In reply to questions raised by representatives, he said that following rule 18, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure, only originals, and not facsimile copies, of the statements of credentials could be accepted by his Committee.

V. ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS TO THE AGREEMENT AND ANNEXES

46. In early 1997, Wetlands International had been requested to draw up draft proposals for the amendment of the Action Plan, appended as Annex 3 to the Agreement. Mr. Derek Scott, on behalf of Wetlands International, presented a report on that work, contained in document AEWA/MOP.1.7. He said that the document specified those changes required to expand the Action Plan to include all 170 species of waterbirds listed in Annex 2 to the Agreement and also identified recent changes in the conservation status of species and populations of waterbirds already included in the Action Plan.

47. Amendment to the Action Plan to include all 170 species listed in Annex 2 required only minor changes in the existing text in the context of potential conflict between human activities and fish-eating birds and the effects of disturbances on colonially nesting birds. That would entail adding the words “and to fisheries” after the words “in particular to crops” in sections 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 of the Action Plan of the Agreement, and also adding a sentence after the first sentence in section 4.3.6 as follows:

“Special attention should be given to the problem of human disturbance at breeding colonies of colonially-nesting waterbirds, especially when these were situated in areas which are popular for outdoor recreation”.

48. One representative said that the new sentence should also include a reference to “brooding and night-roosting”. The representative of the United Kingdom questioned the validity of dividing the population of *Mergus serrator serrator* in north-west Europe into two populations.

49. A representative of the interim secretariat said that those minor changes could be introduced, and any other specific comments on species could be discussed in the technical working group. With regard to the effects of armed conflicts, which had been raised by a representative as a factor potentially effecting protected sites, he said that those effects could hardly be dealt with by the Agreement. The technical working group would also discuss some minor changes to the resolution on the Action Plan (contained in document AEWA/Res.1.9).

50. The Chair thanked Mr. Derek Scott, on behalf of Wetlands International, for his report, and the Parties for their input; after review by the technical working group, the amendments to the Action Plan would be proposed to the meeting for adoption.

51. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the technical working group reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft resolution on amendments to the action plan was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.9/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment. He read out editorial corrections to the draft.

52. Following an exchange of views on the subject, and clarifications provided by the interim secretariat, one representative asked that the report reflect the fact that changes to the annexes of the agreement did not require ratification by the Parties and signatories to the Agreement and could be decided by the Meeting of the Parties. Any Party which objected to a proposed amendment to the annexes had an opportunity to state such an objection at the Meeting of the Parties.

53. The Meeting agreed to resubmit draft resolution 1.9 to the technical working group for further consideration and subsequent transmission to the plenary.

54. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolutions 1.9 and 1.14, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

VI. ADOPTION OF THE CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

55. The representative of the interim secretariat, introducing the draft AEWA Conservation Guidelines (AEWA/MOP 1.8), stressed that, since the guidelines were called for in the Agreement and were at the very heart of its implementation, the interim secretariat had devoted a great deal of time and resources to their preparation, which had been co-ordinated by Wetlands International and had been subject to consultation. The guidelines represented a crucial document to be adopted and widely applied in practice. He thanked the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape/Division of Nature for the financial support provided for the preparation of the guidelines.

56. Mr. Janine van Vessem of Wetlands International, introducing the draft AEWA Conservation Guidelines, expressed thanks for the financial support provided by the Swiss Agency for the Environment, Forests and Landscape/Division of Nature and to the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature Management and Fisheries of the Netherlands. A set of nine guidelines had been prepared: on the preparation of single-species action plans; on identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds; on preparation of site inventories for migratory waterbirds; on management of key sites for migratory waterbirds; on sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds; on regulating trade in migratory waterbirds; on the development of ecotourism at wetlands; on reducing crop damage, damage to fisheries and other forms of conflict between waterbirds and human activities; and for a waterbird monitoring protocol. In addition, there were five appendices: populations of waterbirds requiring national single-

species action plans; globally threatened species in AEWA Range States; information sheet on Ramsar wetlands (RIS); Ramsar classification system for wetland types; and status of waterbird populations covered by trade regulations.

57. The guidelines had previously been considered by a number of experts with a wide range of expertise. Much of the work on single-species action plans had been prepared on the basis of existing material. Drafts of seven of the guidelines had been discussed at Workshop 2 during the International Conference on Wetlands and Development, held in Dakar in November 1998. They were to be viewed as guidance for Parties and Range States in the implementation of the AEWA action plan and had been formulated in a general way in order to be applicable to all 170 species of Appendix II and to all Range States under AEWA. Paragraph 7.6 of the action plan provided for the Technical Committee to assess and review the guidelines.

58. All representatives who took the floor welcomed the draft guidelines and expressed appreciation for the excellent work carried out to compile them. The representative of the European Commission, speaking on behalf of its member States participating in the current meeting, while generally endorsing the orientation of the draft and the way actions were defined and structured, stressed the role of the draft document as guidelines, implying that other measures were possible which would enable a Party to fulfil its obligations under the Agreement. He also believed that, in order to reach satisfactory results, it was not necessary to apply all measures provided for in a particular guideline. Concerning draft guideline number 6, regulating trade in migratory species, he considered there to be a significant overlap with the ongoing exercise by CITES/IUCN to give guidance to CITES scientific authorities in assessing whether trade was actually detrimental to a species. It appeared that there was an opportunity for synergy between two international instruments by liaising on that matter and that future revisions of the AEWA guidelines should take account of outcomes of the CITES/IUCN exercise.

59. The representative of Switzerland emphasised the need to harmonise AEWA key sites with Ramsar sites and to use the same reference basis in delimiting areas.

60. The Meeting agreed to refer draft resolution 1.10, contained in document AEWA/Res.1.10 to the technical working group for consideration.

61. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the technical working group, Mr. D. Stroud, reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft resolution on conservation guidelines was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.10/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment. The co-ordinator pointed out that an annex to the draft decision was still under preparation.

62. The Meeting agreed to refer draft resolution 1.10 back to the technical working group for further consideration and subsequent submission to the plenary.

63. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.10, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended by the Meeting.

VII. ADOPTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES 2000-2004

A. Adoption of the International Implementation Priorities 2000-2004

64. Introducing the draft international implementation priorities for the period 2000-2004, Mr. Mike Moser, Wetlands International, explained that the work already under way had identified critical gaps in information, knowledge and capacity throughout the region; and indicated priority activities to address

those gaps. He welcomed the UNEP Executive Director's comments about the importance of synergies and his invitation to AEWa to work with UNEP in accessing GEF funds, and urged the meeting to give strong support to a GEF proposal which was being drafted for the implementation of AEWa. He stressed that the list of priorities was still a draft, which would be revised in the light of comments by Parties, and urged that it should become a "rolling document" which would be regularly updated.

65. In the ensuing discussion, representatives drew attention to the need for a stronger reference to liaison with the Convention on Wetlands, with a view, in particular, to avoiding duplication; the need to exploit synergies with organizations such as the Convention on Wetlands and IUCN; the need to strengthen the reference to GEF support; the need to balance resource availability with conservation needs; the need for additional projects, including ones on the use of agrochemicals in Africa, on genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and on exotic invasive plant species and the effects of those phenomena on waterbirds.

66. In response to those observations, Mr. Moser welcomed the suggestion that the reference to GEF in the resolution should be strengthened, as GEF had indicated that a strong signal from the current meeting would greatly facilitate access to GEF funds, but cautioned that the criteria for GEF funding were very stringent and the administrative procedures for applying were complex.

67. The representative of France said that, while her country was not yet a Party to the Agreement and hoped to be able to complete its ratification process as soon as possible, it would pledge the assessed contribution that it would have paid had it been a Party, as a voluntary contribution towards implementation projects.

68. Welcoming that offer, the Chair said that other sources of bilateral funding should also be explored, including from the Convention on Wetlands and IUCN.

69. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, Mr. Moser reported on the deliberations of the group concerning draft resolution 1.4, as contained in document AEWa/Res.1.4. on the international implementation priorities for 2000-2004. He read out the proposed amendments to the draft resolution.

70. The Meeting agreed to transmit draft resolution 1.4, as orally amended, for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

71. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.4, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

B. Establishment of a register of international projects

72. Introducing, and orally supplementing, the draft register of international projects contained in document AEWa/MOP.1.17, Mr. Moser explained that the register had been prepared in response to the realisation that a large number of international projects relative to waterbirds were already in progress and to the consequent need to avoid duplication and to exploit the mutual synergies offered. He stressed that the document was a draft and should become a rolling text, which could be updated by the future meetings of the Technical Committee and formally updated by the Meeting of the Parties.

73. In the ensuing discussion, it was suggested that the criteria for inclusion in the register might be too stringent and that non-governmental organization projects should be included, at least for information purposes and that it was not necessary for the register to be formally adopted by the Meeting of the Parties: it was sufficient for the Meeting to take note of the register and its updates. A few representatives

suggested that some projects might have been overlooked and offered to submit clarifications in writing. It was also suggested that the register might be incorporated in the clearing-house mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity and that it should include an indication of time-scale.

74. The Meeting agreed to entrust the technical working group with the further consideration of the register and incorporation of additional projects provided by participants.

75. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, Mr. Moser reported on the deliberations of the technical working group concerning draft resolution 1.5, as contained in document AEWA/Res 1.5, on the establishment of a register of international projects and read out the proposed amendments to the draft resolution.

76. Following an exchange of views the Meeting approved draft resolution 1.5, as amended, for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

77. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.5, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting

VIII. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

A. Establishment of the agreement secretariat

78. A representative of the interim secretariat introduced document AEWA/MOP.1.10, on the establishment of a permanent secretariat for AEWA.

79. The Executive Secretary of CMS said that the CMS secretariat would be interested in having similar terms of reference for all agreements, and he noted that the terms of reference in the document in question were not only those adopted by the Convention, but had also been approved by joint working groups of EUROBATS and ASCOBANS, and had been agreed by the United Nations Office at Nairobi. One minor change in paragraph 6 of annex 2 should be made, to add the words "in consultation with the UNEP Executive Director as appropriate" after the words "selected by the Executive Secretary of CMS".

80. The Chair proposed that the issue should be taken up by the financial and administrative working group, which would then report back to the plenary.

81. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group, Mr. von der Assen, reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft decision on establishment of the permanent secretariat for AEWA was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.1/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment.

82. Following a proposal from the floor concerning the terms of reference annexed to the draft decision, which was accepted by the Meeting, the Meeting approved draft resolution 1.1 for finalization and subsequent adoption by the plenary.

83. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.1, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

B. Establishment of the Technical Committee

84. The representative of the interim secretariat introduced the proposal on the establishment of the Technical Committee of AEWA, as set out in document AEWA/MOP.11, and explained the basis for the division into nine geographical and science-based regions, five in Africa and four in Eurasia. He also explained that, in addition to the nine experts representing regions, it was proposed that three independent experts would be appointed representing specific topic areas and three experts representing IUCN, Wetlands International and the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC).

85. Two representatives requested that, in the delineation of the regions, their respective overseas dependencies be assigned to the appropriate geographical regions. Two other representatives suggested changes in the nomenclature of the regions and allocation of countries to those regions.

86. The Meeting accepted the proposal, on the understanding that, in its further elaboration, the secretariat would take into consideration the views expressed by delegates.

87. The representative of the interim secretariat introduced the draft resolution, contained in document AEWA/Res.1.8, and explained that some regions might have no Party. In that event, the region would be represented by an observer Party until such time as there was a member Party in the region, when that Party would assume the position.

88. There was discussion of whether the members of the Technical Committee should be nominated as individuals or whether specific countries should be nominated, which would then designate experts. It was also pointed out that the arrangements regarding alternates should be specified in the resolution, and not just left in the rules of procedure. Several representatives believed that, in the interests of flexibility and transparency, all Contracting Parties should be able to participate as observers in meetings of the Technical Committee.

89. In response, the representative of the interim secretariat explained that the rules of procedure were based on those of the Scientific Council of CMS, which did not admit observer participation by all Contracting Parties and pointed out that, if the Meeting decided to admit such participants, there would be no financial support for observers. It was also recommended that, in its further consideration of the arrangements, consideration should be given to a system of nominated contact points in each range State, as employed in the Convention on Wetlands.

90. The Meeting decided to forward draft resolution 1.8, as contained in document AEWA/Res.1.8, to the financial and administrative working group for its consideration.

91. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November, 1999, the co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group, Mr. von der Assen, reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft resolution on establishment of the Technical Committee of AEWA was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.8/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment. He made a minor editorial correction to the annex of the draft resolution.

92. Following an exchange of views on whether names of individuals should be included in the text of a resolution of the Meeting of the Parties, it was agreed that the names of the people appointed would be contained in an appendix to the resolution. Several representatives observed that the next Meeting of the Parties would need to re-examine the resolution on the Technical Committee of AEWA and endeavour to find a more durable format for the resolution. The representative of the European Commission, speaking on behalf of its member States present at the meeting, wished to review the geographical groupings contained in the draft resolution. The co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group requested that concerned representatives should provide their proposed amendments to him for incorporation in a new draft of the text.

93. The Meeting approved draft resolution 1.8, as amended, for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

94. The representative of the interim secretariat pointed out that not all nominations for the categories of membership of the Technical Committee had been received and he called upon the participants to provide the secretariat with the names of respective experts.

95. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday, 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.8, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

IX. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

A. Adoption of the budget for the period 2000-2002

96. Introducing the draft budget contained in document AEWA/MOP.1.12, the representative of the interim secretariat explained that the estimates had been based on the assumption of co-location in UNEP premises and had been prepared in accordance with the UNEP financial rules and procedures.

97. In the ensuing discussion, representatives noted the absence of any provision for implementation in the budget and, in particular, for implementation by developing countries. Several representatives also stressed the need for adequate funding for the attendance of meetings by the representatives of developing country Parties. One representative suggested the inclusion of a budgetary provision for an office in Africa. A concern was also expressed that the secretariat was too small to discharge the duties with which it would be entrusted. Other points raised included the possible need for a budget line covering voluntary contributions, in which context it was pointed out that such contributions would not be subject to the 13 per cent UNEP administrative levy. Attention was also drawn to the need for synergies with other organizations, including the Convention on Wetlands, as a means of reducing costs, and to the provision for small grant funding, which had proved very productive in the Convention on Wetlands.

98. In response to those comments, the representative of the interim secretariat said that, as voluntary contributions were very difficult to estimate, they had not been included in the budget. In addition, he explained that the proposed budget was exclusively for the operation of the secretariat: hence, no provision had been made for field activities.

99. The representative of Germany drew attention to his Government's offer to host the secretariat, which would have significant cost benefits to the Agreement, including a grant of DM 50,000 per year; the donation of computer equipment, estimated at \$10,000 in the proposed budget; and the provision of free interpretation for meetings held in Germany.

100. The meeting noted the offer of Germany with gratitude and entrusted the financial and administrative working group with further consideration of the proposed budget, including taking into account the savings contingent upon acceptance of the German offer.

101. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the coordinator of the financial and administrative working group, Mr. von der Assen, reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a new revised budget estimate had been prepared. The draft resolution on financial and administrative matters, contained in document AEWA/Res.1.2/Rev.2, was currently before the meeting for comment. Following comments and

clarifications from the floor, the co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group said that corrections and amendments would be made to the draft resolution 1.2, which would be resubmitted to the plenary.

102. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.2, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

B. Consideration of accepting contributions in kind

103. Introducing the item, the representative of the interim secretariat drew attention to the draft guidelines for acceptance of financial contributions (AEWA/MOP.1.13) and the draft resolution on guidelines for the acceptance of contributions in cash and contributions in kind (AEWA/Res.1.6). He noted that the Final Act required the interim secretariat to consider the question of in-kind contributions after the entry in force of AEWA. The interim secretariat had undertaken research to prepare the draft guidelines which, in the case of voluntary contributions, were based on the guidelines of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS. Concerning contributions in kind, in lieu of payments in cash of the obligatory contribution for administrative costs of convention secretariats, the secretariat had found no precedents. He personally was concerned at the idea of setting a precedent in AEWA, which could give rise to problems over the question of the financial rules and regulations of international organizations, and the question of the obligations entered into when joining an agreement.

104. The Executive Secretary of CMS, expressing support for that view, said that a CMS consultant had examined the question of possible precedents in international conventions and had found none. Citing the example of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), which had exceptional arrangements for in-kind contributions, he personally did not recommend that AEWA follow such a line. He did not wish to pre-empt the decision to be taken by the Technical Committee concerning the instrument to be set up, but it was possible that, in the future, some possible option might be found to assist countries that lacked hard cash.

105. The meeting agreed to forward draft resolution 1.6 to the financial and administrative working group for consideration.

106. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group, Mr. von der Assen, reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft resolution on guidelines for the acceptance of contributions in cash and contributions in kind was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.6/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment. He read out editorial corrections to the text of the draft resolution.

107. The Meeting approved draft resolution 1.6, as orally amended, for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

108. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.6, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

C. Establishment of a conservation fund

109. The representative of the interim secretariat explained that the text of the Agreement clearly allowed for the possibility of creating a conservation fund. He drew attention to draft resolution 1.7 on the establishment of a small conservation grants fund. The Technical Committee was entrusted with

examining how such a fund would be channelled to projects. The main issue before the meeting itself was to consider whether such a fund should be established and only then examine how it should be managed, closely following the guidelines on voluntary contributions.

110. The Executive Secretary of CMS, expressing support for the idea that the fund be managed by another international organization, pointed out that whoever managed the fund had to adhere strictly to the rules and guidelines.

111. During the discussion on the item, several representatives believed that the administration of such a fund should not be unwieldy or cumbersome, as might be the case if it were to be managed by a large international organization. The funding had to be easily administered so as to be rapidly available. One representative, noting that the idea of such a fund was taken from the Convention on Wetlands, said that the administration of the fund should also follow that example. Another representative stressed the need to ensure that the small AEWA secretariat was not burdened with the task of administering the fund or making quick decisions on how to disburse it. There needed to be a clear division of responsibilities.

112. In answer to a query on why the draft decision referred to provision of the fund to developing countries, whereas Article 5, paragraph 3 of the Agreement mentioned no delimitation, the representative of the interim secretariat said that the resolution should perhaps follow the language of the Agreement, although he believed that the fund should give priority to those whose need was greatest. On the question of the management of the fund, he agreed that the AEWA secretariat should not be overburdened. The international organization to administer the fund did not have to be an intergovernmental organization -an international non-governmental organization could also assume the task. One representative cautioned that the Agreement itself was an intergovernmental organization and should examine carefully the question of empowering a non-governmental organization with the administration of the fund.

113. Following the debate, the meeting agreed to refer draft resolution 1.7 to the financial and administrative working group for further consideration.

114. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the financial and administrative working group reported on the deliberations of the group. The comments made by members of the group had been taken into account and a revision of the draft resolution on establishment of a small conservation grants fund was contained in document AEWA/Res.1.7/Rev.1, which was currently before the meeting for comment. He read out editorial corrections to the text of the draft resolution.

115. Following a brief exchange of views, including proposed amendments from the floor, the Meeting approved draft resolution 1.7, as orally amended, for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

116. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.7, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended by the Meeting.

X. ADOPTION OF A FORMAT FOR REPORTS OF THE PARTIES

117. Mr. D Stroud (United Kingdom), introducing the proposal by the United Kingdom on a format for country reports and the relevant resolution, contained in documents AEWA/MOP.1.14 and AEWA/Res.1.3, respectively, said that the proposal was target-based and followed an approach similar to that used by the Convention on Wetlands. The aim had been to streamline the procedure and to avoid duplication with reporting requirements under other agreements. The resolution urged Contracting Parties to prepare their initial reports by 1 September 2000, for consideration by the future Technical Committee at its first meeting.

118. The representative of the secretariat informed participants that Switzerland and Togo had submitted national reports, to test the proposed format, and that those reports were available to the meeting.

119. Many representatives endorsed the proposed format for national reports. One representative believed that the format was comprehensive and suggested that it should be adjusted to be more specific to the AEWA action plan. Another, referring to land-use conflicts over wetlands between farmers, fishermen and others, expressed the view that the effects of those conflicts should be taken into consideration in the draft format.

120. The representative of BirdLife International, commending the proposed format, said that it should be adjusted to take into account issues and problems arising during the reporting period and also to track and follow up issues from one triennium to another, as well as issues that arose at session of the Meeting of the Parties.

121. The observer from WCMC, addressing the issue of the harmonisation of national reports to related conventions, said that his organization was currently studying that aspect of reporting on behalf of the Convention of Biological Diversity.

122. In response to the points raised, it was observed that many of the useful suggestions made could readily be incorporated into the format. That could be done when the technical working group revised the draft format and its relevant draft resolution.

123. The representative of the interim secretariat drew the attention of the Meeting to the draft resolution on the national report format (document AEWA/Res.1.3) and said that matters to be looked into when the technical working group reviewed the resolution included the timing for submission of national reports, which had provisionally been set at 1 September 2000, and the wording dealing with liaison with related conventions on the harmonisation of data and information collection and management.

124. The Chair thanked the representative of the United Kingdom for the work his colleagues had done in preparing the draft format document and said that the technical working group would review the format in the light of the discussion and the suggestions made by representatives.

125. At the afternoon plenary on Monday, 8 November 1999, the co-ordinator of the technical working group reported on the deliberations of the group on the draft resolution on establishment of a triennial national report for AEWA, contained in document AEWA/Res.1.3. He informed the meeting that the technical working group would hold further discussions on the draft resolution and subsequently submit it to the plenary for adoption.

126. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.3, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

XI. PRESENTATION OF THE LOGO FOR THE AGREEMENT

127. A representative of the interim secretariat made a brief presentation on the logo for the Agreement, which was based on a bird's wing on which the name of the Agreement was superimposed. The background colour would be blue in the English version and green in the French version.

XII. ADOPTION OF THE BRENT GOOSE MANAGEMENT PLAN

128. Mr. Sneep, on behalf of the Institute of Forestry and Nature Research of the Netherlands (IBN-DLO) presented a draft international action plan for the Dark-bellied Brent goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*), which had a current population of about 300,000. He said that the action plan sought international support and co-operation along the migration route of the species, so as to achieve an optimum level of population by conserving or restoring natural habitats, regulating hunting and minimising the effect of adverse human activities. Within the framework of the action plan, management options would be presented to each country. The plan could then be adjusted to the situation obtaining in each country. After three years, the action plan would be evaluated, and the role and input of the AEWA Technical Committee would be very useful in that regard.

129. The Chair thanked the representative for his presentation and said that the Meeting had taken note of the report.

XIII. DATE AND VENUE OF THE SECOND SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

130. A representative of the interim secretariat introduced the draft resolution on the date, venue and funding of the second session of the Meeting of the Parties to AEWA (AEWA/Res.1.11), which had been prepared prior to the opening of the Meeting. He said that, in the light of the offer to host the meeting by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany, it was necessary to amend that draft decision and he read out the proposed amendments.

131. The Meeting approved draft resolution 1.11 for finalization and subsequent transmission to the plenary for adoption.

132. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.11, contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting

XIV. OTHER MATTERS

A. Atlas of wader populations

133. Mr. L. Underhill (Avian Demography Unit, University of Cape Town) on behalf of the International Wader Study Group introduced the recently prepared Atlas of wader populations for the AEWA area. He explained that the atlas was an initial draft, prepared by the the Wader Study Group and Wetlands International, drawing on the best expertise in a collaborative process. Funding for the next phase of the Atlas had been requested from the European Union and the final phase, for which a funding source was still being sought, would include printing of the atlas. He invited comments and feedback from all participants and other colleagues, which were to be sent to the address indicated in the draft.

B. GEF proposal on conservation measures for migratory waterbird wetlands areas

134. Mr. Moser (Wetlands International) reported on the development of a proposal to request funds from GEF to support a joint implementation of priorities, under AEWA and the Convention on Wetlands, for the Conservation of a network of critical wetland areas for migratory waterbirds along the African-Eurasian flyways, as contained in document AEWA/Inf.1.11. He said that the criteria for GEF funding were stringent and the proposed route for access to GEF funds would be through the submission of a

proposal which had been prepared for block B project preparation and development facility (PDF), which would result in the development and submission of a full GEF project brief, and would comprise a suite of catalytic activities at regional and national levels.

135. A key component of the proposed GEF project proposal would be the execution of between five and eight site-demonstration management projects for wetlands important for migratory waterbird conservation in different parts of the flyway, and that was one of the ways in which Parties could interlink directly to the project, through offering opportunities for such demonstration projects in their countries. A questionnaire had been attached to document AEWA/Inf.1.11 for that purpose. It was also important to provide written support from Governments and agencies for the project before the end of 1999; if countries were GEF-eligible countries, a letter of endorsement from national GEF focal points would also be helpful, and all such letters of endorsement should be sent to the AEWA secretariat.

136. He requested any Party requiring further information about the project to contact representatives of Wetlands International or the AEWA interim secretariat.

137. In the ensuing brief discussion, many representatives expressed their interest and support for the development of the GEF proposal and, in response to issues raised, Mr. Moser clarified that GEF eligibility was determined by ratification of the Convention of Biological Diversity as well as the condition of being a developing country.

C. Tribute to the organisers

138. At the last meeting of the plenary, on Tuesday 9 November 1999, the Meeting of the Parties adopted resolution 1.12 on a tribute to the organisers of the session, as contained in annex I to the present report, as orally amended in the Meeting.

XV. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE MEETING

139. The present report was adopted by the meeting at its final plenary session, on Tuesday, 9 November 1999, on the basis of the draft report which had been circulated in document AEWA/MOP.1/L.1 and on the understanding that finalization of the report would be entrusted to the Rapporteur working in consultation with the interim secretariat.

XVI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

140. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the Chair declared the session closed at 1.15 p.m. on Tuesday, 9 November 1999.