

REPORT OF THE 8th MEETING OF THE AEWA TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

03 - 05 March 2008, Bonn, Germany

1. Opening

1. Mr. Mungroo, the Technical Committee Chairman, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants to Bonn. He pointed out that this meeting was originally scheduled to take place in Kenya but had to be re-scheduled to Bonn at short notice because of the political unrest in Kenya. This meeting is of particular significance as it is the last Technical Committee Meeting before the 4th Session of the Meeting to the Parties in September 2008. During the three-day meeting, all the documents, resolutions and amendments to the AEWA Action Plan should be drafted and endorsed for submission to the Meeting of the Parties through the Standing Committee, scheduled for June 2008. This meeting will be the last for six TC members who have completed their term of office; these are the Regional Representatives for Southern Africa, Central Africa and North & South-Western Europe as well as the experts for Game Management, Environmental Law and Rural Economics. Mr. Mungroo thanked the members and experts for their invaluable contribution to the work of the Agreement. As there is no formal nomination procedure, these members of the Technical Committee will be replaced following the procedure drafted by the Secretariat and temporarily approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Technical Committee and the Chair of the Standing Committee. The Technical Committee will be called upon to consider the inclusion of this procedure as part of the *Modus operandi* of the Technical Committee. Nominations to fill these vacant posts are expected by April 2008 at the latest.

2. Welcome addresses

2. Mr. Lenten welcomed the participants. He went on to thank the German Government for providing the excellent facilities offered by the new premises, which have been the base of the Secretariat for the last 18 months, and invited all the delegates to visit the offices of the Secretariat on the 19th floor. The building housing the Secretariat is an important building having been a part of the German Government complex before the fall of the Iron Curtain and the German re-unification. The area will gain importance in future due to the new World Conference Center currently being built by the City of Bonn in the direct vicinity of the UN-Campus; unfortunately not in time for the CBD COP9, which is taking place in Bonn in May.

3. Mr. Lenten very much regretted the fact that TC8 could not be held in Naivasha, Kenya as originally planned due to the security issue. He sincerely hopes that the situation will improve after the mediation of the former UN Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan and that it will be possible to hold the next meeting of the Technical Committee in Kenya. Mr. Lenten also pointed out the importance of this meeting being the last TC Meeting before MOP4, while apologizing for the large amount of documents recently circulated to the members of the Technical Committee. The 4th Meeting of the Parties is taking place from 15–19 September in Antananarivo, Madagascar. Preparations are well underway and further information will be available soon. Finally Mr. Lenten wished all participants a fruitful meeting.

4. Ms. Adam took the opportunity to thank the Secretariat for successfully taking up the challenge of organizing this meeting at such short notice in Bonn and for mastering the heavy workload with regard to the

preparation for this meeting so well. Ms. Adam went on to praise the Secretariat for the quality of the numerous meeting documents.

3. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

Document TC 8.2 *Rules of Procedure*

5. Mr. Mungroo pointed out that the Rules of Procedure had already been discussed at length at the last Meeting of the Technical Committee.

6. After going through the paragraphs one by one, no further comments were made and the Rules of Procedure were adopted by the meeting (see Appendix 1).

4. Adoption of the Agenda Work Programme

Documents TC 8.3 *Provisional Annotated Agenda* and 8.4 *Provisional Work Programme* were adopted.

7. Mr. Harradine enquired about the availability of doc. TC 8.23 *Report on the experiences of countries which have phased out lead shot for hunting in wetlands*. Mr. Dereliev explained that this document will be circulated intersessionally and that Ms. Lehmann would give a short presentation during Workshop 2.

5. Admission of observers

8. The Meeting agreed to admit the observers present (see doc TC Inf 8.5 *List of Participants*).

6. Adoption of the Minutes of the 7th Meeting of the Technical Committee

9. The Meeting reviewed doc. TC 8.5 *Draft Minutes of the 7th Meeting of the Technical Committee*.

10. Mr. Lenten pointed out that in the first line of para 40, referring to the online reporting format ‘... *UNEP would provide more funding to elaborate and extend it to other MEAs*’ the word ‘*would*’ should be replaced by the word ‘*might*’.

11. Mr. Stroud pointed out that in para 63, lines 3 and 4, referring to the phasing out of lead shot, could be misleading as a crucial element of Res. 2.2 regarding time-scales is not mentioned. He proposed the following wording: ‘*The parties had decided to depart from the original 2000 deadline and to report to each MOP on progress made to phase out lead shot in accordance with self-imposed and published time-scales*’.

12. Regarding para 13, Mr. Hamza enquired if there had been any progress made in contacting the African Union regarding participation in TC Meetings. Mr. Lenten reported that he had contacted the Presidency but had not, as yet, received any direct feedback other than an indication of interest in mutual work on avian influenza. Mr. Lenten is, however, aiming for a broader cooperation and will continue his efforts to further cooperation by visiting Ethiopia, where the African Union is based and using UNEP channels for this purpose. Mr. Hamza hopes to be able to help by contacting the former Director of the Environment Agency in Libya, who is now appointed as Director of Science and Technology at the African Union and is also well acquainted with AEWA.

13. Regarding paras 11 and 12, Mr. Stroud requested an update on any progress made regarding the lines of communication with the European Commission. Mr. Lenten reported that the Secretariat had met with Mr. Patrick Murphy and Mr. Michael O’Briain at the EC in December 2007 to discuss the representation of the EC at the Meetings of the Technical Committee as well as to discuss the issue of funding. Mr. Dereliev added that regular meetings take place with the EC including, where possible, attendance at those of the

Scientific Working Group of the ORNIS. Since TC6, two meetings of this kind have taken place, however the issue of the EC's participation in TC Meetings is still pending. Discussions will be kept alive and the Secretariat will continue to invite the EC to the meetings of the TC as an observer from a Party to the Agreement.

14. The minutes were adopted with the suggested modifications.

7. Report by the chairman

15. Mr. Mungroo reported on the activities since the last meeting in 2006 in Bern, Switzerland. Regarding the TC Work Plan 2006–2008, the work of the TC has been an ongoing process, which started just after MOP3. According to this Work Plan, 11 major issues were to be fulfilled in the 2006-2008 triennium. Each of these tasks was delegated to working groups consisting of several regional and NGO representatives and experts of the Technical Committee as well as to the Secretariat. Each working group has a designated chair in charge of delivery of results. During TC7 it was agreed that 2 issues, i.e. the development of an online reporting format and a strategic plan would be dealt with by one enlarged group (Group 5), due to the obvious links between these two issues. The Secretariat and the TC members worked intersessionally by email and on the basis of ad-hoc workshops convened by the Secretariat in Bonn. All the 11 tasks have been completed with the exception of the issue of drafting guidance on the application of AEWA Table 1 criteria for categories A3d and B2d - extent of extreme fluctuation in population size or trend. This issue was discussed in Bern and further in an ad-hoc workshop in Bonn. It was decided that more expert help was needed by a statistician; however this work was not able to be contracted out due to lack of funds. Other issues have been communicated to the TC for views and comments; the two most important issues were 1) The procedure of nomination and election of regional representatives their alternates and experts of the AEWA Technical Committee and 2) The Seabird amendment to annex 2 and annex 3 of the action Plan. Mauritius has been instrumental in submitting this proposal for the inclusion of 20 seabirds. The working groups will report most of these issues during the course of the meeting. The resulting recommendations and draft resolutions will be presented to the Meeting for adoption.

8. Report by the Secretariat

16. Mr. Lenten introduced document TC 8.6 *Report of the Secretariat*. He proceeded to explain that, due to the growing team, the work of the Secretariat is now divided up into 4 sections; Bert Lenten is responsible for general management, Florian Keil for information management, Sergey Dereliev for implementation and compliance and Catherine Lehmann for project development. The total workload is now divided up between eight staff members. There is no mention of the day-to-day work of the Secretariat in this report.

17. One of the highlights under the general management section is the development of the strategic plan; the draft has been circulated to the Standing Committee and subsequently to the Contracting Parties for comments. It will be finalized and sent to the Standing Committee for final endorsement and then submitted to the MOP4 for adoption. A new development is that of the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) Action Plan recently launched by the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). This Action Plan overlaps to a certain extent with populations covered by AEWA so care will have to be taken to avoid a duplication of efforts. Feedback from Range States makes it clear that funds are not increasing; it is therefore unlikely that further funding requirements can be met.

18. Another development is the Memorandum of Understanding for the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory raptors and owls. The region covered by this MoU is much more extensive than that of AEWA stretching to the coast of China and encompassing more countries. In this case competition between the two instruments should also be avoided and an appropriate method of communication found.

19. Fundraising is always a challenging issue and focuses on gaining funds for the implementation of the International Implementation Priorities (IIPs). Mr. Lenten expressed his thanks for the receipt of a total amount of 800,000 Euros in the form of voluntary contributions. The amount of 129,000 Euros was allocated to CMS for the Avian Influenza (AI) Taskforce to cover the costs of a meeting and the production of leaflets

as well as the funds for the Technical Committee and Standing Committee Meetings, which turned out to be problematic. These funds should perhaps, in future, be brought back to the core budget; this issue should be discussed at the next MOP. The goal of raising a total of 5,2 million Euros for the implementation of the IIPs is far from being achieved. Most of the IIP projects are linked to the Wings over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project. Serious financial problems have been encountered due to the fact that most countries are facing cuts in budgets.

20. Mr. Lenten introduced Ms. Kirsten Martin who recently joined the Secretariat as coordinator of the Lesser White-fronted Goose Action Plan. This position is fully funded by the Government of Norway. There are currently eight staff members at the Secretariat, four are paid from the core budget and four are paid by contributions from the Parties or other sources. If voluntary contributions diminish, activities will have to be reduced. As from October 2008 the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) will become a fixed term member of staff, which will have a major impact on the budget. This issue will have to be discussed at length at the MOP. Interns were able to make a good contribution to the work of the Secretariat during the last year; however they can only contribute efficiently with fixed-term staff for guidance.

21. The last MOP requested that less emphasis be made on the recruitment of Parties and more on the implementation of the Agreement. Mr. Lenten suggests that there may be scope for re-focusing these efforts. The number of Contracting Parties is currently at fifty nine and a further four to five are expected to accede to the Agreement in the next months. He encouraged the TC to contribute to the process of recruitment.

22. A Memorandum of Understanding regarding cooperation with OMPO was signed in early 2008, as requested by the Standing Committee. Moreover a Memorandum of Cooperation with the organisation for the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) is under preparation for 2009.

23. Regarding Information Management, Mr. Lenten reported that significant progress has been made since the arrival of the JPO, Florian Keil. The news section of the website is updated regularly. The electronic newsletter is distributed every two months by email. Currently an internet forum for TC members is being developed. A number of new publications have been finalized. The 11th issue of the Newsletter has been published recently. Florian Keil works on maintaining the AEWA site as well as the World Migratory Bird day (WMBD) website for this year's celebration, which is in the final phase. He also supports the Avian Influenza website together with the other colleagues involved as well as developing a website for the African ringing scheme.

24. Another project currently in the pipeline is a book on the Black-tailed Godwit to commemorate the 15th anniversary of AEWA in 2010.

25. Significant progress has been made with regard to the online reporting project on the part of the Secretariat due to the input of Mr. Keil and Mr. Dereliev.

26. Ms. Martin has started work as Coordinator of the Lesser White-fronted Goose Action Plan. After discussions with the three Nordic countries involved, disagreements were able to be resolved. Thus progress should be made in the coming months to finalise the Special Species Action Plan (SSAP). This case is unique in that Norway is financing the position of the Coordinator as a non-contracting Party.

27. A new brochure is available on Avian Influenza (AI) and Wild Birds. Mr. Dereliev is involved in the AI Task Force on behalf of the Secretariat. The Proceedings of the latest Workshop in Aviemore are now available.

28. Migratory waterbirds face many threats, including those caused by human activity such as wind farms, soda ash extraction and the production of biofuels. It is the first time that the Secretariat has also been approached with the request to participate in advisory missions in connection with these threats. The Secretariat is in a position to advise governments about the impact and threats to waterbirds in these cases.

29. Of the seven international reviews required by paragraph 7.4 of the AEWA Action Plan, five have been finalized. The remaining reviews connected to the network of sites within the GEF project are scheduled for 2010.

30. Ms. Lehmann has been instrumental in developing the WetCap project for the Secretariat in cooperation with the Spanish Development Cooperation. If we are successful then an amount of 1,5 million Euros could be raised for this project. The feedback to date has been positive, although the focus of development organisations is more on poverty than on the conservation of species.

31. Last but not least is the Great Rift Valley (GRV) Project. The GRV, which is important for all migratory species, has been proposed for nomination as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The AEWA Secretariat has offered to take on the function of advisor and to draft a brochure for approval by MOP4. In order to substantiate the nomination, this will be supported by Ramsar, CMS and CBD resolutions.

32. Mr. Biber thanked the Secretariat, and especially Mr. Lenten, for this excellent report on the work of the Secretariat, which was detailed enough to provide substantial information but also to give an insight into the work of the Secretariat. He went on to congratulate this small, dedicated and competent Secretariat for its efficient handling of this huge amount of work.

33. With regard to the MoU for the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory raptors and owls, Mr. Biber mentioned that Switzerland had been present at this meeting and that the Delegation laid great importance on insisting that all possible synergies with existing instruments, particularly with AEWA, should be taken advantage of. He asked what action is necessary in order to open AEWA so that it can deal with species other than waterbirds, i.e. what has to be introduced or adopted by the MOP; Switzerland would be prepared to present a resolution to this effect.

34. Mr. Lenten clarified that an extension of the Agreement to include other species cannot be done quickly; in the case of raptors and owls, which are not waterbirds, the Agreement text would have to be changed, which in turn would require re-ratification by the Parties. However AEWA could be the tool for the future to incorporate the African-Eurasian Raptor and Owl MoU. This is also the case with the Central Asian Flyway Action Plan (CAF), which also involves greater geographical scope than AEWA; a proposal for the extension of the Agreement could be made as this concerns one of the annexes to the Agreement, which can be changed at any MOP. Thus this would not be an overly complicated procedure. Mr. Lenten went on to point out that amendments to the Annexes of AEWA have to be proposed by the Parties by 9 April 2008. The only proposal received so far has been regarding seabirds, sent by the Government of Mauritius.

35. Mr. Biber expressed his concern regarding the financial situation indicated in the report. The lack of finances will ultimately lead to unsatisfactory implementation of the Agreement. This is of course an issue for the Standing Committee – however the StC did not meet as scheduled – thus it is appropriate for the TC to highlight the special issues of extreme importance and indicate priorities for the StC, when preparing the budget for the next MOP so that different options can be proposed to the Parties to reflect on and also to insist on some increase in the budget to be able to implement the Agreement. He stressed that Contracting Parties are finding it increasingly difficult to justify voluntary contributions in addition to obligatory contributions. It is important to clearly depict how the Agreement functions and that voluntary contributions are absolutely necessary for its implementation.

36. Mr. Lenten explained that MOP3 decided to cut out all activities from the core budget and to use this solely for the running costs of the Secretariat. There are two additional pillars, one to cover the costs of activities and one to cover the travel costs of funded delegates. We have been lucky in having been able to secure voluntary contributions for this purpose. Since 2005 we have established a procedure, whereby, for the first three years, contributions from new Parties have been set aside to cover the costs of ongoing activities and the launching of new initiatives; however this will only be applicable until MOP4. In this way, we were able to accrue 500,000 Euros for additional staff and activities. As from 2008 the post of Information Officer, currently financed by the German Government will be paid for from the core budget; this represents a 20% increase in expenditure. Thus we will face serious problems in the next triennium. The TC should define and set additional priorities for the next triennium.

37. Mr. Biber commented that he was not aware of the message that the Secretariat should pay less attention to the recruitment of Parties. He stressed the continuing importance of this issue. Mr. Lenten responded that this issue came up during the discussion on the Communication Strategy, where Parties suggested that the Secretariat should pay less attention to recruitment and more to implementation of the Agreement; however,

the recruitment of Parties is an on-going process and the Secretariat continues to maintain regular contact with all non-contracting parties.

38. Regarding the area of Information Management and the fact that the workload has been divided up to involve all members of this small Secretariat, Mr. Biber felt that this should also be made clear with a view to improve the capacity of the Secretariat to cope with the overall heavy workload. Mr. Lenten explained that all members of the Secretariat team are involved in information management in the sense that they contribute by drafting articles for the E-news or the regular Newsletter. This approach works very well.

39. Regarding the WOW project, Mr. Biber enquired about the latest design proposal, accepted by all the partners; does this constitute a compromise or is it fully acceptable by the Secretariat? Mr. Lenten answered that an agreement has been reached after long discussions. The brochure representing the new identity of the WOW project has now been finalized and the website will follow suit.

40. In connection with the Pros and Cons brochure mentioned on page 6 Page, Mr. Biber agrees to the existence of pros however asked if the tasks and responsibilities linked to joining AEWA can really be defined as cons? Mr. Lenten stressed that he is anxious to inform potential Parties of all aspects of membership, both the advantages and the duties/responsibilities involved.

41. Mr. Biber expressed his concern with regard to the lack of funds for implementation of 13 projects in the IIP list. This issue should be addressed and tabled at MOP4. Mr. Lenten responded that the priority for additional fundraising is the GEF project, which is closely linked to the IIPs.

42. Regarding the Tana Delta issue mentioned on page 10, Mr. Biber pointed out that the issue of biofuels is in the process of being discussed with all agreements and instances. This is an area of great concern as it is already difficult to grow food for people in Africa, now plantations for biofuel threaten large areas. This is an issue, which should be taken up by the Technical Committee with a view to preparing an appropriate draft resolution.

43. Mr. Lenten answered that this is a growing problem as mining is also a major issue in Africa due to greater demand for minerals resulting from the development in India and China. Thus wetlands are becoming increasingly threatened. This is an issue, which should be carefully monitored by the TC.

44. Mr. Kanstrup used the metaphor of the donkey and the carrot to depict the mismatch in the situation of the Agreement, which is like a donkey trying to pull a cart too big for it – thus neither the carrot nor the whip are effective measures. Mr. Kanstrup went on to stress that the discrepancy between the expectations and resources linked to the Agreement should be strongly addressed at the MOP and that more manpower is needed to support the work. He congratulated the Secretariat on behalf of CIC for the impressive achievement regarding all the work done.

45. Mr. Lenten agreed that the metaphor of the big cart and small donkey is a good depiction of the situation faced by the Agreement. He pointed out that he is lucky to have an effective and motivated team but that more needs to be done.

46. Ms. Adam reiterated the fact that there is not enough money available for implementation of the Agreement and that additional agreements would only lead to each getting a smaller slice of the available cake. Ms. Adam stressed the necessity to try and take advantage of existing resources where possible. She enquired about the exact content of the CAF Action Plan. Regarding the MoU for the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory raptors and owls, mentioned on page 2, Ms. Adam recognized a legal problem in that AEWA would have to be amended, which is a difficult and lengthy process. With regard to Advisory Missions and the involvement of the AEWA Secretariat, Ms. Adam stressed the importance of this and that the issues mentioned are very worrying indeed. Finally Ms. Adam requested clarification about what exactly is meant by project development. She also took the opportunity to thank the Secretariat for all its work.

47. Mr. Lenten informed that the CAF Action Plan had been discussed and finalized although no legal instrument had been established as yet. The CMS Secretariat plans a meeting to discuss the possibility of an MoU for this purpose. On the subject of project development, Mr. Lenten explained that the Secretariat had contacted various development corporations resulting in a positive response from Spain. The Programme

Officer, Ms. Lehmann, who is in charge of project development explained that the focus of the WetCap Project is on capacity building and the development of training modules in line with the WOW project; the purpose of this project is to fill the currently existing gap for the Northern African Region.

48. Mr. Olivier pointed out the strong contradiction with less emphasis on recruiting parties on the one side and a need for additional funding on the other side. He stressed that this goes hand in hand and remains an important issue if AEWA is to move forward. Mr. Lenten clarified that Parties share the cost of the budget according to the UN assessment scale, thus the number of Contracting Parties has no influence on the size of the budget.

49. Mr. Stroud enquired about Advisory Missions and in how far the Secretariat sees this as a growing area of activity. He pointed out that the Ramsar Convention has well-established procedures using the expertise from Contracting Parties. This issue should be highlighted to the MOP, perhaps with a view to establishing procedures whereby Contracting Parties could support the Secretariat, thereby sharing the burden.

Mr. Lenten confirmed that the number of advisory missions is increasing and that the Secretariat will continue to look into potential procedures for cooperation on these issues.

50. Mr. Dereliev gave a short summary on Advisory Missions lately attended by the Secretariat:

51. *Windfarm developments in Bulgaria:* Windfarm development in Bulgaria is a complicated issue involving several projects situated along the *Via Pontica* migration route, not only affecting waterbirds but also the entire European population of the White Pelican and more than half of the population of the White Stork. The Bern Convention opened a case file to look into this issue. AEWA was represented in the second Mission by Mr. Lenten. There were two consecutive recommendations issued by the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, both of which have been ignored by the Bulgarian Government; the first of the windfarms will go into operation this year.

52. *Lake Natron in Tanzania – development of a soda ash extraction facility:* The recent Ramsar Advisory Mission to Lake Natron in Tanzania, whereby AEWA was represented by Mr. Dereliev took place in Dar es Salaam in form of a meeting with the relevant stakeholders to find out how this project stands. The Tanzanian Government has been officially requested to wait for the outcome of the RAM before making a decision on this project and how to proceed. The second part of the Mission was a field trip to Lake Natron, which is the only breeding site of the Lesser Flamingo in Eastern Africa, harbouring 75% of the world population. This old species cannot adapt to even the slightest disturbance so the development of the soda ash plant would certainly have a devastating affect.

53. Mr. Dereliev summarized by confirming that there is a role for AEWA to play by perhaps linking up with the mechanisms of Ramsar and other agreements. In the long-run it may be advisable for AEWA to devise a mechanism, which will stay outside the limits of the other agreements, whereby AEWA could provide advice to Governments.

54. Mr. Lenten suggested drafting a resolution on renewable energies in general, due to the ongoing discussions about biofuel, windmills and also hydropower. This would be an issue for the next MOP.

55. Mr. Stroud went on to say that the issue of extractive industries having major impacts on wetlands, especially in Africa, was discussed at the last Ramsar STRP. He suggests picking up on this and using what could be a good opportunity for collaboration.

56. Ms. Adam pointed out that the reasons for the mentioned advisory missions constitute non-compliance to the Agreement, which should be taken up with the governments of the contracting parties involved; these are delicate issues, however this is the fundamental purpose of AEWA.

57. Mr. Hamza thanked the Secretariat on behalf of Libya and the Northern African Region for initiating the WetCap project. He would also welcome Libya's participation in the WOW project and indicated that this would not involve costs as high as those in other countries. Libya would profit a great deal from the project especially with regard to the technical knowledge.

58. Mr. Nasirwa congratulated the Secretariat on all the work done. He confirmed that there is, at present, no clear way for countries to work together on a positive way regarding cross-border issues, such as that of Lake Natron. This is a problem throughout Africa and the possibility of a resolution on this subject should be looked into.

59. The issue of the heavy workload for Parties was discussed and the question of whether manpower could be increased for this purpose. This is however impossible in the case of developing countries, where it would be dependent on capacity building, which again comes down to funding. Mr. Lenten concluded the discussion by pointing out that the Strategic Plan, which is not only relevant for the Secretariat but also for the Parties, states that one of the targets of the Agreement is to increase the capacity of national staff to implement the Agreement through proper training mechanisms. Thus this issue could be addressed at the MOP in that context.

9. Reports by the Regional Representatives

Central Europe

60. Ms. Kralj reported that the Central European region consists of 19 range states, 10 of which are contracting parties, Italy and the Czech Republic were the last to join in 2006. Questionnaires were sent to all Contracting Parties as well as to three non-contracting parties. Six parties responded: Czech Republic, Italy, Hungary, Slovenia, Bulgaria and Croatia.

61. *Activities to implement the Single Species Action Plans relevant to the region:* Italy has developed Action Plans for the Ferruginous Duck and the Marbled Teal, which include monitoring and habitat restoration as well as a ban on the hunting of look-alike Tufted Duck and Teal in all wetlands.

62. Hungary reported habitat restoration and management, promotion of proper farming and fishing practices, monitoring etc. In Bulgaria, national action plans were developed for the Pygmy Cormorant, Red-breasted Goose, Ferruginous Duck, White-headed Duck, Corncrake and Slender-billed Curlew, however enforcement is poor due to lack of funding by the government. The Bulgarian Government has approved a list of SPAs but little progress has been made on their designation. Monitoring is being carried out for several species. No national action plans have been prepared in Croatia. SPAs were designated in 19 cases for birds covered by SSAPs; monitoring is being carried out for several species.

63. *Emergency situations affecting waterbirds and their habitats since the last TC:* Bulgaria reported of extreme cold during the winter of 2007/2008 causing freezing of the majority of freshwater wetlands and leading to high concentrations of waterbirds in unfrozen areas. This, in turn, led to mass-scale poaching including protected species such as Red-breasted Geese and the Lesser White-fronted Geese. No law-enforcement measures were carried out by the relevant authorities.

64. *New or major ongoing waterbird species re-establishment initiatives:* Italy has a successful ongoing project for the reintroduction of Purple Swamphen (*Porphyrio porphyrio*). The breeding population was estimated as being 85 – 90 pairs in 2007. A project for the re-introduction of the White-headed Duck (*Oxyura leucocephala*) proved to be unsuccessful.

65. *Activities on eradication or other types of action regarding alien species:* Croatia and Italy reported on the eradication of Coypu or Nutria (*Myocastor coypus*). In Croatia herds of Podolac grey cattle were introduced to manage growth of invasive false indigo, a bush, which overgrows wet meadows where the Corncrake breeds.

66. *Habitat conservation:* Italy has established a conservation area of 3000 sites – the Ramsar Classification System was used to collect information. In Bulgaria 114 SPAs were proposed but none had actually been designated due to lack of political will. In Slovenia artificial breeding rafts were set up for the Little and Common Terns (*Sterna albidrons* and *S. hirundo*). In the Czech Republic, a project is being carried out on the disturbance of geese flocks in gathering places. As part of the project the influence of hunting, traffic and wind turbines will be analyzed. Italy reported on the recreation of fresh water marshes in Sicily. Slovenia

reported on several projects for creating wetlands for corncrakes. Croatia has also recently launched a restoration project of the only Redshank breeding habitat in the country.

67. *Phasing out the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands:* Italy introduced a national law in 2007 banning the use of lead shot in wetlands. In the Czech Republic a ban is in place and a workshop for hunters on the use of non-toxic shot has been carried out. In Hungary a ban has been in place since 2005. In Slovenia the problem is not recognized due to the low intensity of waterbird hunting. There is no legislation in Bulgaria and Croatia as yet.

68. *Research activities on waterbirds and their habitats:* Most countries reported mid-winter bird counts (IWC) and the monitoring of birds in protected areas by different coloured ringing projects. Italy reported an evaluation project of North Atlantic wetlands and the setting up of conservation guidelines. Bulgaria monitors Red-breasted Geese. Education activities are often implemented as part of PHARE or LIFE projects. In the Czech Republic, publications on toxic shot were published. Educational activities were reported within the RSPB and WWT joint project on the Red-breasted Goose in North-Eastern Bulgaria.

69. *Problematic cases threatening water birds and their habitats:* Problems that persist are hunting, poaching and the development of tourism, particularly in Bulgaria. Italy reported a high mortality of Greater Flamingos poisoned by lead shots as well as the cutting back of forest, which had a negative effect on breeding species. In Croatia and Slovenia, the Little and Common Terns are threatened by gravel extraction.

70. The use of Guidelines was reported by Bulgaria. Hungary and Slovenia reported conservation activities in line with the AEWA Conservation Guidelines but did not actually use them in practice because the relevant authorities were not adequately informed about them.

Central Africa

71. Mr. Jérôme Mokoko reported that from the 9 range states the only two Parties to AEWA are Congo (since 1999) and within the past 10 years Equatorial Guinea has been the only new state to join. Priorities are set differently in that part of Africa; conservation efforts are focused on forests and less on waterbirds and wetlands. The most important challenge to this region remains communication, while political instability and the lack of agreement among countries pose additional challenges to addressing the implementation of AEWA. Wetlands International and Birdlife International are not represented in this region. Mr. Mokoko concluded by thanking Secretariat for its work.

North and South-Western Europe

72. Mr. Biber regretted that due to late consultation of the countries in this region and lack of appropriate feedback there is nothing to report.

Eastern Europe

73. Mr. Khomenko reported that he has received no responses from contracting parties regarding his request for regional updates. He pointed out that National Focal Points are most probably overloaded with questionnaires already received. He suggested considering the creation of 'AEWA implementation councils', particularly in Eastern European countries to support the work of the Focal Points. He went on to report on the Ukrainian situation, which is of course not representative for the entire region, however does to some extent represent the common problems faced in the region. In the Ukraine, implementation is not dealt with by the Government but by NGOs partnering with Wetlands International and BirdLife. The problem of leadshot is a very urgent issue to be addressed in the Ukraine; awareness needs to be raised as hunting is on the increase after the economic decline. There is an emergency situation in the Kerch Strait (between Azov and Black Seas) due to an extensive oil spill in waters between the Ukraine and Russia (in non-defined waters) caused by a Russian tanker. International conventions are very important to resolve this situation. There has been no environmental impact assessment (EIA) by the Ukraine or by Russia. It is worth thinking about the development of a mechanism such as the Advisory Missions described by Mr. Dereliev, with the help of international conventions. In the Black Sea area a large-scale project was submitted for the implementation of AEWA in the region; despite support from AEWA however, no funds were received

because the countries involved did not provide letters of support. Mr. Khomenko thanked the AEWA Secretariat for its support of this project, which will be re-submitted in due course.

74. Mr. Dereliev explained that regarding the development of 'AEWA implementation councils' the strategic plan does actually call for countries to establish such mechanisms linked to similar ones of other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). The Ramsar Convention has, for example, established 'Ramsar National Wetland Committees', which, in the case of some countries, include operational AEWA units. In the process of discussions with countries on this issue it was decided to encourage countries to link up with already existing mechanisms involving all stakeholders, who need to be consulted in the case of national reporting, which cannot be done by the Focal Points alone.

75. Mr. Dereliev went on to agree that oil spill emergencies urgently need to be dealt with but that this can only be done by immediate reaction; advisory missions take months of organization and are thus not an appropriate mechanism for dealing with this type of emergency situation. Countries should be made aware of the existing guidelines on what to do in these cases and when, on order to avoid extensive damage to waterbird populations.

Eastern Africa

76. Mr. Nasirwa regretted that due to problems with email systems he has not been able to get much information regarding regional updates. This region includes ten Contracting Parties. Upcoming issues include the finalization of a Single Species Action plan for the Lesser Flamingo, developed by AEWA, where Kenya is in the process of developing a national action plan. The biofuel issue is affecting the Tana Delta and probably also the Yellow Swamp. Regarding development, the Lake Natron issue is being discussed. In Sudan the issue of oil will affect most of the wetland sites. Two countries took part in the Avian Influenza work – surveys were carried out in Kenya and Sudan. The WOW project called upon most countries in the region to improve waterbird census work. Training proposals are coming in but the problem of lacking capacity persists. The Rift Valley project is an ongoing initiative, whereby important sites within the Rift Valley are being conserved. Mr. Nasirwa concluded his report by stressing the need for further activities to take place in the region to make AEWA more transparent; he gave the example of the satellite-tracking project for the Sociable Lapwing, which was followed with enthusiasm.

Northern Africa

77. Mr. Hamza reported that there are seven Contracting Parties in the region and that Morocco will be in a position to finalise the ratification process soon. Feedback was provided by Algeria, Morocco and Libya only. Regarding activities to implement the SSAPs relevant to the region, all three countries dealt with the Spoonbill-questionnaire distributed by Wetlands International as well continuing to address the IWC. Regarding emergency situations, drought continues to be a serious problem for wetlands in the region. In Egypt the issue of controlling the numbers of invasive Indian House Crows is being discussed. Regarding habitat protection, two National inventories of waterbird habitats are being carried out in Algeria. In Libya the establishment of a National partnership project to set up a national governance system of PA is underway as well as a national wetland inventory project. In Morocco GEF project management of protected areas is underway as well as the development of management plans for some Ramsar sites.

78. Regarding the phasing out of lead shot for hunting in wetlands, although hunting has been officially banned in Libya and Algeria for some time, illegal hunting continues to be a problem. National consultations and awareness-raising activities are essential to deal with this problem, in addition to appropriate legislation.

79. Research and monitoring activities include the declaration of 42 Ramsar wetland sites in Algeria as well as the preparation of a full inventory of 18 new wetlands on the Ramsar list. Ringing schemes have been started for Greater Flamingos. In Libya an inventory of wetlands will be launched shortly. Winter census and the assessment of more than 56 coastal and inland wetland sites continued. Ringing activities are being carried out on an annual basis. Avian Influenza surveys conducted under the auspices of EGA reported no cases of H5N1 infection.

80. In Morocco the winter census of waterbirds was carried out and a national plan of action for the conservation of the Northern Bald Ibis is under development. Public awareness-raising activities are being

carried out in all three countries in the form of leaflets, posters and audiovisual material. Libya and Algeria participated in the World Wetland Day. Major threats to waterbirds in the region are posed by the millions of tourists to the region every year as well as urban pollution and illegal hunting. The AEWA Conservation Guidelines are being applied in the region in water management, rural development programs, reforestation and the production of brochures, organisation of meetings etc.

81. Mr. Hamza concluded by thanking the responsible Focal Points for their input as well as the Secretariat staff for continuous support.

10. Current status regarding implementation of the International Implementation Priorities 2006 – 2008 (IIPs)

Document TC 8.7 *Current status of implementation of the AEWA International Implementation Priorities Plan 2006-2008.*

82. Mr. Lenten reported that although progress is being made, full implementation of the IIP depended on the availability of funding. Many of the IIP are projects directly connected to the WOW project; for the WOW project alone, a sum of €1 million is needed to ensure full implementation. Document TC 8.7 provided an overview of progress for the individual projects.

83. Reporting on the progress of the projects listed, Mr. Lenten explained that in the case of the SSAP for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose, the project has been significantly delayed; work is still being carried out by Alterra in cooperation with Kent University, however results are still pending. The Meeting decided that a time-scale in the form of a 6-month deadline should be set for the consultants to ensure delivery in early 2009.

84. Mr. Biber enquired about the realistic expectations regarding the accrual of lacking funds during this year. Responding, Mr. Lenten explained that the priority this year was the funding for MOP4 in Madagascar as well as the planned African pre-MOP.

85. The Secretariat reported on problems encountered with the finalization of several projects; stringent steps may be necessary in one of the cases. Mr. Biber enquired about the possible cause of these problems and how much money had actually been lost. Mr. Dereliev answered that in most cases projects can be rescued so that in terms of money, losses can be kept to an absolute minimum. The recruitment procedure for consultants should be more rigorous in future.

Extraordinary agenda item: Recap of Workshops 1, 2 and 3

86. Mr. Dereliev explained that the objective of the workshops was to discuss and approve the international reviews, which have been prepared in accordance with para 7.4 of the Action Plan or MOP resolutions.

i. Report on the status and trends of populations

Document TC 8.18 *Report on the conservation status and trends of populations, 4th edition.*

87. Supplementary papers were distributed regarding a Red List index for AEWA-listed species, which serves as an indicator of threat to AEWA species as well as an overview of proposed revisions to Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan.

88. Wetlands International has been requested to deliver additional data on the population trends to document the definition of a long-term decline very soon.

89. Mr. Stroud pointed out that there has been a change in status relating to the Greenland White-fronted Goose in Table 1; this should be reviewed again and amended.

90. The report was adopted subject to the delivery of additional data on population trends by Wetlands International and a review of the status of the Greenland White-fronted Goose.

ii. Report on the stage of preparation and implementation of single species action plans

Document TC 8.19 *Report on the stage of preparation and implementation of single species action plans.*

91. Supplementary paper No.3 on lessons learnt was distributed to help with the drafting of the resolution. Due to the heavy workload for Focal Points in general, and due to the large amount of questionnaires distributed within a short period of time, Mr. Schall made the suggestion to combine these to prevent overburdening.

92. Mr. Lenten explained that the ad-hoc handling is unavoidable because of funding developments and the ensuing contracts. Mr. Harradine suggested obtaining expert guidance to maximize the value of questionnaires.

93. Mr. Olivier reiterated the fact that the workload regarding questionnaires and documents for consultation amounts to a full-time job. He pointed out that language is a problem due to the fact that most documents are available in English only, making them difficult to follow for French-speaking countries. Mr. Lenten explained that the Secretariat does not have the resources to translate all documents, for example translation costs for all the TC8 documents would amount to approx. €40,000. Mr. Olivier indicated that the French Government may be able to support the Secretariat in this.

94. Mr. Stroud pointed out that the executive summary is missing in this report.

95. The report was adopted subject to the addition of an executive summary by the contractor as well as improvement with regard to the formatting as well as making conclusions clearer.

iii. Report on the re-establishment projects

Document TC 8.20 *Report on the re-establishment projects*

96. Supplementary paper 4 was distributed to give an overview of the recommendations and improvements resulting from this review. The Meeting agreed that this was a high quality report however the IUCN guidelines on re-introduction should be appended to the final report.

97. This report was adopted subject to the addition of the IUCN Guidelines on re-introduction to the final report.

iv. Report on pertinent hunting and trade legislation in each country relating to the species listed in Annex 2

Document TC 8.21 *Report on pertinent hunting and trade legislation in each country relating to the species listed in Annex 2.*

98. The report was adopted.

v. Report on the use of lead shot in wetlands

Document TC 8.22 *Update report on the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands.*

99. The report was adopted.

vi. Report on the effects of climate change on migratory waterbirds

Document TC 8.24 *Report on the effects of climate change on migratory waterbirds.*

100. This report was adopted.

vii. Report on the status of introduced non-native waterbird species and hybrids thereof

Document TC 8.25 *Report on the status of introduced non-native waterbird species and hybrids thereof*.

101. This report was adopted by the meeting; in the case of the respective draft resolution it was agreed to mention the need for action regarding the issue of the increasing population of the Ruddy Duck in the Netherlands, raised by Mr. Dereliev.

102. Resolution-drafting teams were established and requested to work on the drafts of the ten resolutions for submission to MOP4 for discussion by the Meeting.

11. Report by Working Group 1

103. Mr. Stroud introduced Doc TC 8.8 *Paper on priority waterbird taxa that would benefit from an early review of the limits of their populations – Report by TC Working Group 1*. Through resolution 3.2, the Third Meeting of the Parties requested Wetlands International to prioritise which waterbird taxa would benefit from an early review of the limits of their populations. The initial work was done in 2006 in the form of a broad-level priority list for reviewing species (in appended Doc TC 7.8) The outcome of the workshop carried out in March 2007 can be seen in the attached spreadsheet. With the help of the Secretariat, five criteria were established. The question of the level at which this work should be presented to the MOP, i.e. at the species level or higher was discussed by the Meeting. As this is also a question of the costs involved, Wetlands International agreed to provide an estimate in consultation with Euring and Afring schemes. Suggestions were made with regard to potential sponsors for the project.

12. Report by Working Group 2

104. Mr. Dereliev introduced Doc TC 8.9, *Guidance on Assessment of Degree of Concentration on a Small Number of Sites*. This is the second criterion used for the categorization of the populations in Table 1 of AEWA for which the TC was requested by MOP3 to develop interpretation guidelines. The Working Group met in mid-March in Bonn and finalized a proposed definition: “A population which *concentrates onto a small number of sites at any stage of its annual cycle* is one 90% or more of which is localized in 10 or fewer sites in a particular annual cycle stage”. This was based on a definition used by Birdlife for ‘Localised’ species whereby it was noted that there is a large degree of overlap between AEWA species currently categorized as A3a and B2a. Mr. Clausen presented some guidelines for the definition, thereby using examples of populations to explain the routine of migrants for each of the 7 or more phases of their annual cycle and the impact of natural or man-made threats on all sizes of flocks as well as explaining the definition of sites based on the fact that migratory birds do not consider borders. Mr. Dereliev thanked Mr. Clausen for these extensive guidelines.

105. Mr. Nagy referred to the work of the WOW project on the identification of critical site networks and pointed out that the results obtained could be seen to be a practical input in the form of a concrete list for consultation with the TC.

106. After some discussion, the meeting adopted the definition with the following wording:
“A population which *concentrates onto a small number of sites at any stage of its annual cycle* is a population of which 90% or more is localized in 10 or fewer sites in a particular cycle stage”

13. Report by Working Group 3

107. Mr. Mungroo introduced Doc TC 8.10 *Guidance on dependence on a habitat type which is under severe threat – Report by TC Working Group 3*, based on the request by MOP3 for guidance on the interpretation of criteria for categories A3b and B2b used in Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan and referring to one of these criteria, i.e. the dependence of habitat types under severe threat. In mid-March 2007, the working group met at the AEWA Secretariat premises for a one-day ad hoc workshop, which agreed on a definition for the

criterion as well as on guidance for its application. Mr. Clausen gave the example of the long-term decline of *Zostera marina* and the levels of interdependence between Dark-bellied Brent Geese and *Zostera marina* across the bird's flyway from Western Europe over the White Sea to Eastern Siberia. After a short discussion regarding the basis of this definition, i.e. whether it should be based on real figures or judgement-based, the definition was approved by the Meeting. It was decided that that a resolution should be drafted for submission to MOP4 (adding Mr. Clausen's example as an annex) in combination with the definition dealt with in para 12 relating to the criteria for categories A3a and B2a.

14. Report by Working Group 4

108. Mr. Dereliev reported that the progress of drafting guidance on the application of Table 1 criteria for categories A3d and B2d (extent of extreme fluctuations in population size or trend) was largely covered in the report of the Chairman. Further discussions on this issue took place in an ad-hoc workshop in March 2008 in Bonn. It was decided that more expert help was needed by a statistician. Efforts had been made to contact appropriate statisticians however funds are still lacking to cover this work. Following some discussion it was decided that Mr. Dereliev would compile a list of the exact questions to be answered and distribute this to the Technical Committee. The financial aspects and the technical execution of the task involved, *inter alia* whether to base the analysis on samples or on the entire table were discussed. If the Technical Committee decides on a complete revision of Table 1 to test the application of the definition, the issue will have to be postponed to MOP5. Mr. Nagy agreed, on behalf of Wetlands International to examine the technical and financial aspects and make suggestions for the way forward.

15. Report by Working Group 5

109. The Secretariat reported on behalf of the Working Group on the work done in the past triennium following the decisions made in MOP3 to develop a new Online National Reporting Format (Doc TC 8.11) as well as on the AEWA Strategic Plan (Doc TC 8.12) based on the CMS Strategic plan. The Strategic Plan was commissioned to the same consultant responsible for the development of the communication strategy. The Strategic Plan covers AEWA as it currently stands in terms of geographical and taxonomic scope, it is however a flexible tool, which will be regularly reviewed for guiding the development and implementation of the Agreement. Because these issues are closely linked the two Working Groups dealing with them in the past were merged. In 2006 a small workshop took place and the two documents were, to a great extent, aligned. After consultation with TC the paper version of the reporting format was finalized and submitted to the World Conservation and Monitoring Centre (WCMC) in April for implementing a UNEP-funded project for knowledge management within biodiversity MEAs; the development of an online reporting system for CMS and AEWA are a part of this project.

110. Mr. Dereliev introduced Mr. Tristan Tyrrell from WCMC who has turned the paper version into an online reporting system with the help of feedback from the Secretariat. Mr. Tyrrell presented the Knowledge Management Project, which is divided into three parts; examining the potential of harmonising national reporting across the biodiversity MEAs, looking at the online reporting facility and finally developing the knowledge-management-portal search facility through which information can be retrieved across the MEA-websites. Thus with the help of a crawler mechanism, a scoring system and lists of key words, as well as a help-system, information can be retrieved across the websites in a simple, user-friendly system. In the case of the reporting system for AEWA all persons from a specific country involved in compiling the national report have to be authorized by the Secretariat before they can register. The generator and management tool allows for everyone at the Secretariat to enter information on one system. The format can be duplicated for use in other languages. The Secretariat staff will attend a training workshop in Cambridge where further ways of developing the system will be looked into, such as analytical and query tools etc.

111. Explaining the concept behind this project, Mr. Lenten pointed out that the first step is to harmonize the reporting system within the CMS family and the next step will be to include other MEAs. An initial test phase is planned with a subsequent presentation of the finalized format to MOP4 for approval so that reporting for MOP5 will be the first exercise in usage.

112. Mr. Dereliev went on to point out that the system is a dynamic one, which can be constantly developed and evolved. The Meeting stressed that provisions must be made to avoid duplication of work and also to enable all stakeholders within one country to use the system with the necessary rights to enable them to provide feedback or verification before reports are submitted to AEWA. The concept behind the system is to spread the reporting burden. After approval by the MOP, the system will have to be amended according to the obligations resulting from resolutions passed so that the MOP will have to give the Standing Committee the mandate to approve necessary amendments on its behalf.

113. The issue of inserting and up-dating information into the reporting format was raised and after some discussion a proposal was compiled for presentation to the next MOP. The initial insertion of information will involve the biggest effort. The Secretariat does not currently have the resources for that.

114. Mr. Keil added that the Generator Tool gives the Secretariat the ability to create online reports - this could be expanded for use in reviews. It is ultimately for the MOPs and COPs of the MEAs to decide how this system should evolve.

115. Mr. Mungroo thanked Mr. Tyrrell for his presentation.

16. Report by Working Group 6

116. Mr. Dereliev introduced the documents TC 8.13 *Draft proposal for amendments of the AEWA Action Plan to accommodate conservation measures for seabirds – Report by TC Working Group 6* and TC Inf 8.1 *Potential role of the Agreement in the conservation of seabirds* regarding a draft proposal for amendments in the AEWA Action Plan to accommodate conservation measures for seabirds following the recommendations of the TC paper on the role of the Agreement in the conservation of seabirds. The paper was circulated to the TC last summer. He invited the TC to review these generally drafted paragraphs and make amendments or additions as appropriate.

117. Mr. Biber suggested being more precise and splitting the issues of by-catch and over-fishing into two separate paragraphs. He also suggested addressing the threats resulting from waste pollution and terrestrial predators. Finally he suggested that the draft resolution should include a request to the Secretariat to liaise with relevant institutions dealing with fisheries to inform them of the problems facing waterbirds.

118. The general feeling of the Meeting was that the wording was not strong enough; a number of suggestions were made with regard to this.

119. Mr. Stroud suggested that Ramsar resolution 9.4 should be considered in this context as it covers a whole range of issues.

120. Mr. Mungroo concluded that the Secretariat will re-draft the amendment proposal based on the discussed amendments and table it on the following day.

17. Report by Working Group 10

121. Mr. Dereliev reported on the implementation of tasks with regard to the AEWA Conservation Guidelines as agreed at the previous TC Meeting. Judging by the feedback from the regional representatives the general impression is that they are not being widely used. The suggestions made in the previous meeting on how to make the Conservation Guidelines more user-friendly have been picked up by the Secretariat; they have now been divided into individual publications and are available on the website, where their accessibility has also been improved. The Secretariat has also started to feature one of the guidelines in each issue of the regular e-news in order to highlight them and improve usage.

122. The next guidelines on infrastructure developments were contracted out and are currently in circulation for comments. The consultants are authorities on Environmental Impact Assessment so these guidelines will provide parties with sound advice as to how to avoid infrastructural impacts.

123. The importance of translations was pointed out, however financial resources are lacking at present. Mr. Hamza agreed to assist AEWA by seeking funds for translation of shorter documents for distribution in his region.

18. Amendments to the Action Plan

124. Mr. Dereliev introduced document TC 8.14 *Proposal for amendment of paragraph 7.5 of the AEWA Action Plan with regard to the frequency of update of international reviews required under paragraph 7.4* regarding the proposal for an amendment to para 7.5 of the Action Plan to introduce a new schedule for the update of the international reviews described in para 7.4. This proposal is based on a number of factors, the first being the heavy workload of the National Focal Points with regard to extensive questionnaires and the second is that funds have to be raised for contracting out the work. After careful examination of the draft versions of the international reviews, the Secretariat concluded that a triennial update, as demanded by MOP3 is not necessary in the cases where the time span is too short for any significant changes in the situation. To adjust the frequency to a more cost-efficient level, the Secretariat has prepared an overview of the proposed intervals for each review accompanied by a short justification. After several opinions from participants, the general consensus of the Meeting was to change the time-frame as proposed by the Secretariat pointing out that simplifying reporting will not result in a reduction of funds available but that they will be re-directed. The paper will be re-drafted accordingly by the Secretariat after the Meeting.

19. AEWA Single Species Action Plans

a. Progress in implementation and development of SSAPs

125. Mr. Dereliev reported on the Secretariat's activities to coordinate the implementation of the SSAPs. A comprehensive review of the implementation of current action plans is available. He went on to report on some important issues regarding individual action plans.

Sociable Lapwing and Black-winged Pratincole

126. Through cooperation with RSPB a coordinator's position was able to be established in Kazakhstan whereby a working group of experts works together with regard to projects for the conservation of habitats.

Red-breasted Goose

127. This coordinator's post, based in Romania, was strengthened through the Secretariat in cooperation with the RSPB, WWT and Birdlife Netherlands; there is an active working group, maintaining active communication through a list server and has a website.

Northern Bald Ibis

128. The Secretariat has supported the work of the advisory group, which was set up mainly for re-introduction projects, to help it assume responsibility for coordinating projects. The Secretariat negotiated with Birdlife International who will be the main contact for AEWA regarding coordination of this action plan as a whole.

Light-bellied Brent Goose (East Canadian High Arctic population)

129. Contact has been established with the working group; a coordination mechanism will soon be established.

Corn Crake

130. An expert group has been established but the Secretariat has no close contact as yet.

Great Snipe

131. The Secretariat is experiencing difficulty in identifying an expert willing to run this group.

Ferruginous Duck

132. The conservation team is currently inactive; the Secretariat is liaising with WWT to revive this team.

Maccoa Duck

133. The action plan for this African species was approved on a temporary basis by the StC in 2007. There is an organisation in Africa eager to take up the coordination of this plan. Contacts will be strengthened and it is hoped that this plan can be endorsed in after MOP4.

White-headed Duck

134. The Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT) has shown an interest in running the coordination of an expert group.

135. Regarding new plans in progress for the *Dark-bellied Brent Goose* some deadlines have been set up. For the *Lesser White-fronted Goose* the process started in 2005 and was slowed down due to differences of opinion in the Nordic countries with regard to re-introduction. Last year a solution was negotiated. Thanks to a grant from Norway, Ms. Martin was able to be recruited as a consultant to coordinate the implementation. The plan is now in the process of being revised and will be circulated to the parties within the next few weeks. The *Lesser Flamingo* action plan was already distributed to the range states for consultation and will be submitted to MOP4. The first draft of the *Eurasian Spoonbill* action plan has been delivered and is currently with the TC for comments. The *Black-tailed Godwit* action plan underwent a consultation process at expert level and was sent to the Technical Committee last month. Many comments were received, which will be incorporated into the revised version in close collaboration with the consultant. This is not an easy plan to deal with.

136. For the *Madagascar Pond Heron* and the *White-winged Flufftail*, the drafting process has been started in cooperation with CMS, due to a grant from Italy to cover both species. AEWA is contributing with a small co-sponsorship. Finally work on the action plan for the Icelandic population of the *Whooper Swan* is progressing; the first draft will be delivered soon.

137. Mr. Clausen expressed his surprise that work is being carried out on an Action Plan for the Icelandic population of the Whooper Swan as the population is continually increasing. He urged AEWA to concentrate on Action Plans for populations, which are actually on the decline. Mr. Lenten answered that this action plan is being developed by WWT under the auspices of AEWA but without any financial contribution on the part of AEWA.

138. Mr. Dereliev added that the Icelandic population of the Whooper Swan is actually listed on Table 1, column A. AEWA was approached by WWT on this, however, ultimately the decision is with the Contracting Parties on whether this action plan should be accepted or not.

139. Mr. Nagy pointed out that action plans play an important role in promoting the flyway approach as a concept. Regarding the Great Snipe, he referred to a small group connected to Birdlife Estonia dealing intensively with the Great Snipe and which could be approached. This Russian-speaking group also has good contacts to Norway, where there is a large population.

140. Regarding the Whooper Swan, the Caspian population is doing badly so it may be an option to explore the possibility of an exchange of experience between the groups dealing with the Icelandic and British Island populations and that of the management of the Caspian population group with WWT.

141. Mr. Kanstrup stressed the importance of finding a clear way forward in the case of the action plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose.

142. Mr. Dereliev explained that a meeting is planned for 2009 regardless of whether the consultants can deliver the mortality report by then, so that a decision can be made on how to proceed. The decision should then be made by the TC, depending on what can be achieved by MOP5.

143. Mr. Harradine pointed out that work on the action plan for the Dark-bellied Brent Goose started when the population was larger; it has since dropped. Hunting aspects were a key issue at the time. He is in favour of pressing the consultants to deliver in light of the change in the population status, so that the information can be used by those involved.

b. Enhanced AEWa SSAP format

144. Mr. Dereliev reported on this ongoing process, which started in February. The current SSAP format was approved by MOP2; it was drafted by Birdlife International and approved by the TC. In the meantime eight plans have been endorsed and more are in progress. The feedback received from compilers and implementers made clear that there was a need for revision of the existing format and a need to make it more streamlined and enhanced giving a clearer indication of the priorities within the lifespan of the plan.

145. As part of this process, the coordination of action plans has been examined and this should still be based on working groups. The appropriate ToR were already discussed at TC7, however no real progress made. The ToR were discussed at a recent meeting of the working group of the Red-breasted Goose Action Plan, which resulted in a lot of criticism but no really constructive suggestions for a new approach. In the case of the LWfG a different approach is planned because of the complications referring to re-introduction in this case, whereby representatives of the range states involved will bring in their experts so that this will be a policy-led group rather than an expert-led group. Experiences made with this approach will be reported.

146. Mr. Stroud requested a clear timetable for the finalization of these ToR, which have been in circulation since TC7 to avoid any problems for current working groups. Mr. Dereliev explained that any comments from the TC (either during or after the meeting) on this issue, based on the supplementary paper distributed to the Meeting, could be incorporated and the ToR could, in turn, be circulated together with the revised format and submitted to the MOP for approval. Alternatively the process could be kept within the TC for review.

20. Avian Influenza

a. Update

147. Mr. Dereliev gave a short update of activities since the last TC Meeting. The Secretariat has mainly been involved in the work of the Avian Influenza Task Force, which is coordinated by the CMS Secretariat, and also took part in the 2nd workshop of this scientific task force in Aviemore, Scotland last year. The proceedings of this workshop have now been published and are available at the CMS Secretariat. The coordination is now split up between CMS and FAO.

148. Mr. Lenten pointed out that an Arabic version of the leaflet is being funded by the Netherlands as well as a German version by the German CIC branch. So the leaflet is now available in the English, French, German, Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Arabic languages. The post of the coordinator for the task force is being funded by Belgium. The task force plays a very important role in disseminating facts about the role of birds in spreading the disease, especially with regard to the calls for culling birds, which we are still confronted with. He went on to mention Mr. Keil's role in helping with the development of the website as well as in the production of CD ROMs on the workshops in Kenya and Scotland, which are now available.

b. Draft AI Resolution for submission to MOP4

Doc TC 8.15 *Responding to the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza H5N1 – Draft Resolution.*

149. Mr. Stroud made a presentation to give some background before considering the Draft Resolution. He described the history of the disease from the initial outbreak of the highly pathogenic strain in 1997, which was still geographically restricted to Asia to the first human fatalities in 2002. Since MOP3 the virus has spread into Africa and Europe bringing with it a significant impact on human health as well as on economies. One of the major concerns for CMS and AEWa were a range of inappropriate responses such as killing of waterbirds and destruction of wetlands. In terms of policy response the AEWa MOP in 2005 brought out resolution 3.18, the Ramsar Convention subsequently brought out a similar resolution in Kampala, followed by CMS in Nairobi. The Scientific Task Force has since then brought together a wide range of agencies to achieve a common sense of responsibilities.

150. The resolution has three annexes; the first relates to the outcome of the Aviemore meeting in June 2006, the second annex relates to ornithological expert panels and the third to a summary by the scientific task

force. Mr. Stroud pointed out that this package of materials is very much a joint venture, involving the input of many people particularly those present at the Aviemore Meeting and represents a consensus view of all the participants. He particularly thanks Rebecca Lee and Ruth Cromie from WWT who were instrumental in providing material for the AEWa draft resolution. The texts have been subject to consultation by FAO, OIE, the European Commission and WHO, who have all raised valuable points, which have been incorporated to strengthen the text. He went on to comment on the parts of the draft resolution, the preamble, which notes the improvements in surveillance ability, initiatives developing user-friendly tools for decision makers, outlines the key research and other information needs, highlights particular problems and notes the request by MOP3 to provide additional guidance and feedback. The operational part of the draft resolution urges Contracting Parties to use the guidance appended, which includes clear recommendations. Aviemore conclusions and recommendations: all the guidance available has been pulled together; Rebecca Lee has turned the results into a website, which is more up-to-date than the paper version. A problem has been the chronic lack of identification of species and the quality of information presented by governments to OIE, which has been decreasing in time – species of wild birds have not been accurately reported. Annex 3 pulls together best practice guidance for collecting information for accurate identification. The Task Force has been keen to develop a neutral summary of the current situation. As a similar draft resolution is in the process within the Ramsar Convention, it may be advisable to bring these two documents together to make them as compatible as possible.

151. Mr. Biber questioned the need for a resolution on this issue as there is already a functioning network in place. Mr. Lenten replied that AEWa does have a role as migratory birds are being blamed for the spread of the disease. He added that “resources permitting” should be added to the AEWa activities and suggested adding a paragraph requesting parties to help us in the production of leaflets.

152. Mr. Harradine pointed out that there is no reference to ‘unwise responses’ in the preamble. He went on to point out that the involvement of hunters should be mentioned with regard to surveillance activities. He also pointed out that the term ‘poultry’ should include waterbirds and game birds, as this is the case in the UK.

153. Following a discussion on the merits, or rather differences between the resolutions of AEWa, the Ramsar Convention and CMS, Mr. Biber suggested enquiring whether or not IUCN is also planning a similar resolution in its upcoming World Conference.

154. Mr. Olivier reported on Avian Influenza analysis carried out by Wetlands International and OMPO financed by the European Commission in Africa and Eurasia whereby over 20,000 birds are being tested.

155. The general feeling of the Meeting was that the aspect of synergies between the treaties should be emphasized – the suggestion was made that this aspect could be brought up in the post-meeting press conferences.

156. Mr. Mungroo thanked Mr. Stroud for the clear and informative presentation and confirmed that the Secretariat would finalize the draft resolution including a reference to hunters and to waterbirds and game birds as discussed.

21. Other reports

157. With regard to ongoing projects, the Executive Secretary reported on the *Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project*, where good progress is being made, however funds still have to be accrued on a large scale.

158. Mr. Nagy went on to inform about the Wings over Wetlands Project, which is partly funded by GEF, partly by the German Government and partly by the AEWa Secretariat, which has committed itself to providing US \$ 1,3 million, partly in kind through the input of the Information Officer, Florian Keil and partly in cash. He also thanked Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark for their contributions to this project, which is made up of 3 major components:

- *The creation of a Critical Site Network Tool*, supporting many AEWA IIPs. The resulting web portal is designed to cater for site managers who can log in and find the important species for their sites as well as information on ecological aspects. It also caters for the organizations involved in protection of populations as well as governments. UNEP-WCMC is responsible for programming the portal. This year gap-identification and monitoring workshops are being carried out in the 4 priority regions: Western and Central Africa, Southern and Eastern Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Birdlife International has been requested to analyse the ecological requirements of species and the production of flyway maps has been contracted out. It is expected that the data can be pulled together in due course, followed by a trial phase for the web portal.
- *The development of regional training programmes* is progressing pending funds for their implementation. Regional training boards have been set up with representatives of governments, AEWA and Ramsar in the regions incorporating the input of various consultants. A generic training module is to be developed and regional pilot testing carried out in June to provide feedback. Wetlands International is trying to identify funds with a focus on training trainers on a regional level and for trainees to provide training in their countries on a national level. Materials and PowerPoint presentations are being developed, which can be translated.
- *Eleven demonstration projects* are underway in Estonia, Lithuania, Hungary, Turkey, Senegal, Gambia, Niger, Yemen, Tanzania and South Africa. These all cover aspects that connect socio-economics with ecology.

An exchange of experiences between all three components is assured. The project supports the establishment of contacts between site-managers across flyways and also between sites on individual flyways so that persons involved can profit from each others experience.

159. Mr. Keil reported on the communication concept of the project, for which he is responsible. The main medium is the website under www.wingsoverwetlands.org, which he went on to present. All the organisations involved are represented. The website includes a 'latest news' section, reporting on current activities. Currently around one hundred people are working on the project - they were able to get together at a meeting in Wageningen at the end of January. The communication established there will be further developed due to easier access to information through the website, an appropriate forum and other electronic solutions. The three project components have their own pages, where the teams involved maintain their areas and fill them with information. Currently Mr. Keil is working with the Communication Team at Wetlands International, which is also hosting the website, to incorporate the new design and further develop the website.

160. Mr. Lenten thanked Mr. Keil for his presentation and went on to explain the problems facing the WOW project. During the initial drafting phase of the project a sum of 12 million USD was aimed at for a 5-year duration of the project. Since then the US dollar has lost so much purchase power that the overall timeframe had to be reduced to 4 years, i.e. until 2010. The AEWA Secretariat has not been able to raise sufficient funds and some of the funds raised had to be re-directed for the AI issue, which was unforeseeable, thus changes in the environment have had an impact on this project. This project is unique in that there are four main partners; Birdlife International, Wetlands International, Ramsar and AEWA working closely together so that common efforts are being made with regard to fundraising – Wetlands International is working on a fundraising strategy for this purpose. Mr. Lenten mentioned funds provided by Denmark and France last year and urged the Technical Committee members to examine possibilities of funding by their countries to enable the further implementation of this promising project.

161. The meeting expressed some concern at the apparently difficult financial situation and how this can be dealt with. Mr. Lenten and Mr. Nagy explained that available funds will be used for the implementation of the most important components of the project such as the Critical Site Network Tool, while cuts may have to be made in other areas.

162. Mr. Mungroo thanked Mr. Keil and Mr. Nagy for the information given and expressed his sincere hope that sufficient funds can be raised and expectations for this project fulfilled.

163. Mr. Keil went on to give a presentation of a new system, the TC Workspace, an electronic web-based communication space currently under development using the resources of the Secretariat. The object of this initiative is to make the work of the Technical Committee easier by organising the communication within the

TC. Each TC member and observer will have an account, which he or she will be able to edit and up-date. All the documents will be stored centrally and made available to TC members and observers. Mr. Dereliev will work with the new tool, customizing it and organising the workflow as well as defining access and user rights.

164. Responding to the suggestion that National Focal Points could have access to this tool to help broaden the expertise that the TC can draw on, Mr. Lenten suggested that this could be examined at a later stage.

165. The Secretariat is grateful to Mr. Johannes Schramm, who has done a great job working on this and other projects.

166. The system was enthusiastically welcomed by the Meeting. Mr. Mungroo thanked Mr. Keil and congratulated him on the good work done.

22. Reports of the Technical Committee and the Secretariat to MOP4

167. Mr. Lenten informed the Meeting that the report of the Secretariat will be based on the reports to the Technical and Standing Committees and structured according to the 4 sections of the Secretariat's work; General Management, Information Management, Implementation and Compliance and Project Development. The report will be presented by the four professionals in the Secretariat.

168. The report by the Technical Committee will be drafted by Mr. Dereliev and Mr. Mungroo soon and communicated to the members of the Technical Committee for comments. This report should reflect the substantial amount of work completed during the last 3 years. Both reports should give the Parties a comprehensive and clear insight into the work of the Secretariat and the Technical Committee.

23. Proposals to the Rules of Procedure for the Technical Committee for submission to MOP4

169. Mr. Dereliev introduced Doc TC 8.16. He reported that there had been a lack of an election procedure of new members in the past and that a more structured procedure was needed. The Secretariat has drafted a proposal, which will ultimately become a part of a larger document, the *Modus operandi* of the Technical Committee and which will include other procedures. This proposal is currently being used to recruit three new regional representatives and three experts to replace those, whose term is coming to an end at the end of the current triennium.

170. The suggestion was made to include an assessment of the average expectations of work – at least the number of formal meetings, the approximate number of documents for consultation and an overview of how the work is carried out. This is however difficult to define as the workload differs within each triennium so it is difficult to generalise.

171. Ms. Adam pointed out that the definition of the function of the regional representatives was already included in Resolution 3.13. Mr. Dereliev suggested compiling an annex to the declaration of the candidate based on the tasks as described in resolution 3.13 and the current RoP as well as the minimum requirements in sessions or intersessionally to allow individuals to make their own estimate of the workload/time involved.

172. Mr. Lenten went on point out that Technical Committee meetings have had to be reduced to two per triennium instead of three and to avoid any further reduction due to foreseeable financial problems during the next triennium he proposed foregoing the translation of documents into French.

173. Mr. Olivier repeated his offer to approach the French Government and request support for French translation, which is especially important in the case of francophone African countries, if they are to be able to participate in AEWA issues.

174. Mr. Dereliev went on to explain that the Technical Committee cannot operate entirely in two languages because of the dynamic nature of the work which does not allow for regular translation by all those involved.

175. Mr. Biber stressed the fact that governments have to be made aware of impeaching activities because of the restricted budget. Donor countries have to be shown where the difficulties are; the Secretariat should make a list of the urgencies that cannot be fulfilled for this purpose.

176. Mr. Mungroo welcomed this suggestion and closed the discussion, requesting the Secretariat to follow up the suggestions made.

Reports by the Resolution-Drafting Groups

177. The following draft resolutions were compiled by the drafting groups during the meeting; copies were distributed for discussion by the Meeting:

1. Phasing out Lead Shot for Hunting in Wetlands

178. After discussion the Meeting approved this draft resolution subject to minor adjustments by the Secretariat (with the help of Mr. Stroud) after the meeting.

2. Hunting and Trade Legislation

179. After discussion the Meeting approved this draft resolution subject to the agreed amendments and additions, which will be incorporated by the Secretariat after the meeting.

3. Responding to the Need for Improved Knowledge of the Status of Some populations and Factors Affecting Declines in Other Populations

180. The Meeting agreed that this draft resolution will be finalised by the Secretariat in cooperation with David Stroud.

4. Developing International Best Practice for the Conservation of Threatened Waterbirds through Action Planning and Re-Establishment

181. This draft resolution was approved by the Meeting.

5. The Effects of Climate Change on Migratory Waterbirds

182. The draft resolution was approved by the meeting subject to consideration of comments noted during the discussion.

6. Introduced Non-Native Species in the Area of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement

183. This draft resolution was approved subject to minor amendments to be carried out by the Secretariat after the Meeting.

7. Establishment of an Implementation Review Panel

184. This resolution was drafted by Ms. Adam as a result of the concern about non-compliance of AEWA. She noted that this should be presented to MOP before the draft resolution on phasing out lead shot – once the committee is established, its functions could be expanded to the issue of lead shot. Mr. Lenten pointed out that resources may be required by the Secretariat in connection with this panel.

185. This draft resolution was approved by the Meeting subject to the minor amendments discussed, which will be made by the Secretariat after the Meeting.

8. Proposals for amendments to the annexes of AEWA

186. Currently proposals for amendments to the Annexes of AEWA can only be made by Parties. This draft resolution is meant to extend this to allow the StC to make proposals for amendments to the Annexes. Thus

the Standing Committee would be considered to be a party.

187. The draft resolution was approved subject to minor adjustments to be carried out by the Secretariat after the Meeting.

9. International Implementation Priorities (IIPs) 2009 – 2011

188. Mr. Lenten introduced the supplementary document Resolution 3. 11 IIPs for 2006 – 2008. He proposed that the list remains as it is with the exception of projects which have already been implemented. Two projects, formerly discussed, should be added:

- The project on further research on threats to species and populations as a result of climate change, and
- Training workshops for Contracting Parties to help them in implementing the Agreement.

189. Mr. Khomenko went on to specify the details of the project on climate change, which would be a research task for one expert. The title of the proposed project is: *Bioclimatic modelling of changes in the distribution of species and populations critically and highly threatened by climate change under the different climatic scenarios.*

190. It was suggested that the cost of this should be re-calculated; this will be dealt with by the Secretariat.

191. The proposal to keep all the projects still to be implemented on the list with the addition of the two named above was adopted by the meeting. The Secretariat will draft the resolution.

192. Mr. Dereliev listed the remaining resolutions to be drafted by the Secretariat:

- Resolution introducing the definitions to two Table 1 criteria – this is a short resolution to be drafted by the Secretariat after the Meeting.
- Standard resolution introducing the list of International Implementation Priorities.
- Resolution on the Strategic Plan and national reporting format – in this case a draft will be circulated to the TC for input.
- Resolution to endorse the new Species Action Plans.
- Amendments to the Annexes to the Agreement – proposals from Contracting parties to amend Annex 2 and 3 including the frequency of international reviews, the addition of 20 seabird species, conservation measures for seabirds and changes to Table 1 as well as an amendment to one of the paragraphs on the protection of species.

193. Mr. Lenten proposed further resolutions on renewable energy. Mining is also an emerging issue in Africa, which could have an impact so this may also be a case where a resolution is called for. The Secretariat will draft one or more resolutions on these issues in consultation with the TC.

194. Mr. Dereliev introduced a document presenting the revised paragraphs regarding conservation measures in marine environments. After some discussion it was agreed that Mr. Clausen would draft a new paragraph on aquaculture by the end of the week so that the deadline for submission of amendment proposals to the Action Plan could be met.

195. He went on to introduce a list of proposed revisions to Table 1 of the AEWAA Action Plan. With regard to the 4th edition of the conservation status report (CSR4), the TC had come to the conclusion that justification should be provided for each suggested revision. Wetlands International had not been able to provide this due to the large number of populations involved, would however provide justification for the changes which involved the sub-categories A3c and B2c, which were categories showing a significant long-term decline. The other categories were more straightforward so justification would be more easily verifiable. The TC would thus have the opportunity to revise the list in its entirety and provide feedback so that the list could be finalised and submitted in the form of an amendment proposal for Table 1.

196. Mr. Harradine expressed his concern that changes regarding trends should not be made without a thorough examination of all the values tabulated, particularly with regard to statistical change as opposed to biological change. Illustrated by the example of the graphical summaries for the Mallard, he explained that although the North-west European population appeared to be declining, which could be explained by short-stopping, the counts in the Baltic and Nordic region showed an increase over the period, which may be consistent with fewer birds moving down from the north east and staying further north. Thus it could be questionable whether this really constituted good evidence of a long-term decline over the respective period.

197. Mr. Clausen concurred with Mr. Harradine's observations and went on to explain that the data for North-west Europe and the Baltic had not been combined in the past due to computer capacity deficiencies, which were, however, no longer a problem. This was the case for data sets for a number of duck populations. Thus contradictory trends would remain a problem until full analysis could be done. In the case of the Mallard, a major factor was that the population stayed in the milder parts of lakes and sea areas of the Baltic rather than moving west because of a series of very mild years. He stressed that Wetlands International should, in future, merge the data for the analysis of this particular species as well as other populations in future CSR reports, by combining different sectors in one graph instead of splitting them into two.

198. Mr. Harradine noted that the TC had previously agreed to review and consider the criteria and also how to interpret the criteria for changes in population stability (increase/decrease) and that this would be tested after MOP4, however MOP4 should be informed of that intention and the issues raised. He went on to suggest that this aspect should be added to that programme of the TC for reporting to MOP5 on the changes in criteria-based assessment.

199. Mr. Biber recalled that a study on the situation of the alpine population of the Goosander (*Mergus merganser*) had been presented at TC7 and raised the question of whether this was an issue of a population to be recognised

200. Mr. Dereliev reported that this information had been taken into account in the revision of the CSR by Wetlands International, which had been represented at that meeting by Mr. Simon Delaney. He went on to explain that he did not see any split in the population of the Mallard.

201. The Chairman asked those present if there were any doubts regarding other species on the list, otherwise only the Mallard could be considered for removal from the list.

202. Mr. Harradine confirmed that, from his point of view, the Mallard was the most contentious species, although the Common Pochard was another species where the data should be thoroughly examined. He underlined that clear indications would be required that these declines were statistically significant.

203. Mr. Dereliev summarised that these changes would be proposed unless there were any other significant concerns and the other changes concerning the sub-categories involving significant long-term decline would be distributed to the TC as soon as Wetlands International had finalised the respective justifications.

204. Mr. Clausen requested more time to be able to consider the report as a whole together with other relevant data such as distribution maps.

205. Mr. Dereliev stressed the need for a timeframe for submission of the opinions of those involved because of the deadline for proposals for MOP4. He reiterated that the main concern related to the populations in the categories A3c and B2c, which involved trend analysis.

206. The Chairman set the deadline for comments as the 14 March 2008.

24. TC work plan 2006 – 2008

207. Sergey Dereliev introduced document TC 8.17, the *AEWA Technical Committee Work Plan 2006 – 2008*. He continued by going through the individual tasks of the Working Groups and amending the column 'intersessional tasks' accordingly.

- **WG1/Priority taxa** – apart from a small clarification to be made on calculations, this work is done.
- **WG2/Site concentration** – the definition is approved, the draft resolution will include a guidance text (compiled by Mr. Clausen).
- **WG3/Habitat** – the same applies here – both definitions will be combined into one draft resolution.
- **WG4/Fluctuation** – will continue into the next triennium – resources are needed to fulfil the tasks.
- **WG5/Strategic Plan and national reporting format** – task done.
- **WG6/Seabirds** - this amendment proposal was signed off pending an additional paragraph on aquaculture (to be drafted by Mr. Clausen).
- **WG7/IIPs** – this will remain unchanged apart from the IIPs already implemented and with the addition of climate change and the training of contracting parties for implementation of the Agreement.
- **WG8/Climate change** – the review compiled by BTO was signed off – draft resolution will be finalised. Guidelines on the mitigation of the impact of climate change will be submitted by BTO soon and circulated to the TC.
- **WG9/Lead Shot** (experiences of countries where lead shot has been phased out) – this is still in process, the resulting document will be in the form of an information leaflet. Mr. Kanstrup suggested presenting this in a side-event at MOP so that the Parties can profit from it.
- **WG10/Guidelines** – TC members are all involved in the reviewing of guidelines and assessing the need for updating. The Secretariat has undertaken to improve the website presence of the guidelines and to make them easier to use. Work in this group will continue.

25. Date and Venue of the next Technical Committee Meeting

208. Mr. Lenten informed the Meeting that he hopes to be able to hold the TC9 in Naivasha, Kenya in early 2009.

26. Any other business

209. Ms. Adam enquired about AEWA's involvement in the CBD COP to be held shortly in Bonn. Mr. Lenten answered that the Secretariat is planning its own exhibition linked to the World Migratory Bird Day and also to the WOW project. The Secretariat will follow the process of the CBD COP. Mr. Keil mentioned that any input from the TC in connection with the WMBD website would be highly valued.

210. Mr. Lenten reported on progress made with regard to MOP4. A Host Country Agreement has been signed and a local Task Force established. The initial dates of 7 – 11 September had to be moved by a week to 15 – 19 September. The venue will be the Presidential Palace, which is very suitable apart from the logistical and security problems involved, however solutions can be probably found for these problems. The Secretariat is working closely with the French Government, who will help to organise the meeting. Diplomatic Missions in Madagascar as well as Madagascar Air have been approached to obtain support for the Government of Madagascar. Fundraising for this meeting is a priority issue at the moment. Responding to a question regarding possible side-events during MOP4, Mr. Lenten requested any propositions for side events to be communicated directly to him by email. The participants were informed that a CD would be made available to the delegates of MOP4 including all the documents from past meetings. He concluded by welcoming those present to attend MOP4 in Madagascar.

27. Closure

211. Mr. Lenten expressed his thanks for all the valuable contributions made by the participants throughout this meeting while apologising for the heavy workload involved. He took the opportunity to thank those, whose terms of office are coming to an end and presented them with a copy of the Rare Birds Year Book 2008. He thanked the Chairman, Mr. Mungroo for all his efforts, remarking that he had only missed one meeting during his term of office and expressed his hope that Mr. Mungroo would continue to support AEWA as an Ambassador to the Agreement. He went on to thank Ms. Rachelle Adam, Mr. Preben Clausen, Mr. Jérôme Mokoko, Mr. Oliver Biber and Mr. Elijah Yaw Danso (Expert for Rural Economics – not present

at the meeting), who will also be sorely missed, while highlighting their particular, individual contributions to the work of the Technical Committee over the years.

212. Before closing the meeting, the Chairman thanked the Secretariat and all the colleagues who made his job as chairman very easy by maintaining a productive and relaxed atmosphere throughout. His term of office began with AEWA's 'birth' - since then AEWA has come a long way. He expressed his sincere wish to follow its further development and offered to continue contributing whenever he can.

APPENDIX 1

RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR MEETINGS OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE OF THE AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS (AEWA)¹

General functions

Rule 1

The Technical Committee (hereinafter referred to as Committee), established in accordance with Article VII of the Agreement provides scientific and technical advice and information, to the Meeting of the Parties and, through the Agreement Secretariat, to the Parties; it makes recommendations to the Meetings of the Parties concerning the Action Plan, implementation of the Agreement and further research to be carried out; it prepares for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties a report on its activities, which shall be submitted to the Agreement secretariat not less than one hundred and twenty days before the session of the Meeting of the Parties; it carries out any other tasks referred to it by the Meeting of the Parties. The Technical Committee works closely with the Standing Committee to ensure consistency across the Agreement's work.

Representation and attendance

Rule 2

1. In accordance with Article VII paragraph 1, the Committee membership shall comprise:
 - (a) nine experts representing the different regions of the Agreement Area (northern & south western Europe, central Europe, eastern Europe, south-western Asia, northern Africa, central Africa, western Africa, eastern Africa and southern Africa) elected among all the Parties on the recommendation of the Parties of the region in question;
 - (b) one representative appointed by each of the following organisations: the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), Wetlands International, the International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC); and
 - (c) one expert from each of the following fields: rural economics, game management, and environmental law; elected by the Parties.
2. Any Party has the right to recommend an expert in the fields of rural economics, game management and environmental law for nomination by the Meeting of the Parties.
3. With the exception of the experts in the field of rural economics, game management and environmental law, all the above-mentioned representatives shall name an Alternate Member for each position to be approved by the Meeting of the Parties.

Rule 3

Except as provided for in Rule 7, attendance at meetings of the Technical Committee shall be limited to members of the Technical Committee or their Alternates and observers of the Parties.

Rule 4

Only members of the Committee (hereinafter the members) shall exercise the voting rights. In his/her absence, the Alternate shall act in his or her place.

¹ Adopted by the 8th Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee, 03 - 05 March 2008, Bonn, Germany

Rule 5

1. The term of office of the members shall expire at the close of the second ordinary Meeting following that at which they were elected, unless extended by agreement of the Meeting of the Parties. At each ordinary meeting of the Meeting of the Parties, elections shall be held only for those regional members whose term of office will have expired at the close of the meeting and for any regional member who indicates a desire to step down without completing a full term of office. The same provisions shall apply with respect to the alternate/ members nominated in accordance with Rule 3.

2. In the instance of a member and his/her alternate standing down simultaneously without completing a full term of office, the Chair of the Committee, in close cooperation with the region/organisation involved and in consultation with the Agreement Secretariat, is permitted to nominate an expert of the region or organisation involved to replace the member and alternate intersessionally with full voting rights. The term of office of the replacement member/alternate shall expire at the close of the next ordinary Meeting of the Parties with the possibility that the Meeting appoints him/ her as a representative or alternate.

Rule 6

1. The Chairperson may invite observers of non-contracting Parties and the Chair of the AEWA Standing Committee.

2. Furthermore he may invite or admit a maximum of four observers from specialized international inter-governmental and non-governmental organisations.

3. In addition, at each meeting of the Committee, the Chairperson may invite guests to contribute to specific agenda items.

Officers

Rule 7

The members shall elect a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson from their regional representatives of the Parties, for terms corresponding to those of the Meetings of the Parties. This election will normally take place as soon as possible after the Meeting of the Parties, and the newly elected officers shall assume their functions upon election.

Rule 8

The Chairperson shall preside at meetings of the Committee, approve the provisional agenda prepared by the Secretariat for circulation, and liaise with the members between meetings of the Committee. The Chairperson may represent the Committee as required within the limits of the Committee mandate, and shall carry out such other functions as may be entrusted to him/her by the Committee.

Rule 9

The Vice-Chairperson shall assist in the execution of the Chairperson's duties, and shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

Rule 10

The Agreement Secretariat shall serve the meetings of the Committee.

Elections

Rule 11

If in an election to fill one place no candidate obtains an overall majority in the first ballot, a second ballot shall be taken, restricted to the two candidates obtaining the largest number of votes. If the votes are equally divided in the second ballot, the presiding officer shall decide between the candidates by drawing lots.

Rule 12

If in the first ballot there is a tie amongst candidates obtaining the second largest number of votes, a special ballot shall be held amongst them to reduce the number of candidates to two.

Rule 13

In the case of a tie amongst three or more candidates obtaining the largest number of votes in the first ballot, a special ballot shall be held amongst them to reduce the number of candidates to two. If a tie then results amongst two or more candidates, the presiding officer shall reduce the number to two by drawing lots, and a further ballot shall be held in accordance with Rule 12.

Meetings

Rule 14

Unless the Meeting of the Parties decides otherwise, meetings of the Committee shall be convened by the Agreement Secretariat in conjunction with each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties and at least once between ordinary sessions of the Meeting of the Parties.

Rule 15

Where in the opinion of the Committee an emergency has arisen that requires the adoption of immediate measures to avoid deterioration of the conservation status of one or more migratory waterbird species, the Chairperson may request the Agreement Secretariat to urgently convene a meeting of the Parties concerned.

Rule 16

Notice of meetings, including date and venue, shall be sent to all Parties by the Secretariat at least 45 days in advance and, in the case of extraordinary meetings, at least 14 days in advance.

Rule 17

A quorum for a meeting shall consist of half of the members of the Committee. No decision shall be taken at a meeting in the absence of a quorum.

Rule 18

Decisions of the Committee shall be taken by consensus unless a vote is requested by the Chairperson or by three members.

Rule 19

Decisions of the Committee by voting (pursuant to Rule 19) shall be passed by a simple majority vote of the members present and voting. In the case of a tie, the motion shall be considered rejected.

Rule 20

A summary record of each meeting shall be prepared by the Secretariat as soon as possible and shall be communicated to all members of the Technical Committee.

Working groups

Rule 21

The Committee may establish such ad hoc working groups as may be necessary to deal with specific tasks. It shall define the terms of reference and composition of each working group.

Rule 22

In so far as they are applicable, these Rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of working groups.

Rule 23

The Committee shall receive reports from other committees and working groups established under the Agreement as necessary.

Communication procedure

Rule 24

Any member of the Committee, or the Secretariat, may submit a proposal to the Chairperson of the Technical Committee for a decision by correspondence. Upon request by the Chairperson, the Secretariat shall communicate the proposal to the members for comments within 60 days of the date of communication. Any comments received within these limits shall also be thus communicated. In case of emergency the proposal shall be communicated to the members for comment within 30 days.

Rule 25

If, by the date on which comments on a proposal were due to be communicated, the Secretariat has not received any objection from a member, the proposal shall be adopted, and notice of the adoption shall be given to all members.

Rule 26

If any member objects to a proposal within the applicable time limit, the proposal shall be referred to the next meeting of the Committee.

Rule 27

The Secretariat shall inform the Contracting Parties on the date and venue of the next Meeting of the Committee. For each Meeting of the Committee the Contracting Parties will receive at least the provisional agenda and draft minutes of the previous meeting. All other documents to be discussed will be made available through the Agreement's website.

Rule 28

The regional representative shall act as a co-ordinator for range States and Contracting Parties in their region, submit a report to the Committee on AEWA Implementation in their region and disseminate to the technical focal points of Contracting Parties the outcomes of Committee meetings.

Other functions

Rule 29

In accordance with Art. 3 c) of the Agreement the Chairperson shall submit a written report on the Committee's activities to the Agreement Secretariat not less than one hundred and twenty days before the session of the Meeting of the Parties..

Final provisions

Rule 30

These Rules shall be applied at the first meeting of the Committee following their approval by the Meeting of the Parties, and may be amended by the Committee as required, in accordance with the provisions of the Agreement and decisions.