

REPORT OF THE 11th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE¹
27- 30 August 2012, Accra Ghana

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¹ Adopted by the Technical Committee after consultation via the TC Workspace.

TC11 Decisions and Required Actions

AGENDA ITEM	DECISION	ACTION
Agenda item 6. Election of Officers	The Meeting elected Mr David Stroud as the new Chair of the TC and re-elected Mr Hichem Azafzaf to continue as Vice-Chair of the TC.	
Agenda item 7. Reports by the Regional Representatives	The Meeting adopted the revised regional reporting template.	Regional representatives will in future submit their reports to the Secretariat in advance of TC meetings.
Agenda item 8. Report of the Secretariat		The Secretariat will circulate CMS COP10 resolutions related to the Future Shape process to TC members.
Agenda item 9. AEWA Single Species Action Plans	The priority list of AEWA species for the development of future Action and Management Plans was adopted with two amendments. The Meeting adopted slightly re-worded generic Terms of Reference for International Species Expert Groups under AEWA.	Both lists will be finalised by the Secretariat and posted on the TC Workspace for final comments.
Agenda item 16. WG 10 Emerging Issues	To establish a new joint WG with the Ramsar STRP on habitat loss and degradation	
Agenda item 17. TC Work Plan 2012-2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working Group Chairs are to send the completed pro-formas for all tasks to the Secretariat. The Secretariat will amend/update the draft workplan accordingly and post it on the workspace for final comments. - Mr Stroud will produce a timeline of activities to monitor progress on Working Group tasks. - TC to produce draft Work Programme with indicative priorities for TC work for next MOP.
Agenda item 19. Any Other Business	The Meeting decided to add cooperation with the Global Inter-flyway Network (GIN) to the TC Workplan.	WG5 (CEPA) will incorporate a task on GIN into its workplan.
	The Meeting endorsed questions on the conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose to be submitted to the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group (see Annex 2).	The Secretariat will forward the questions to the IUCN and will inform the TC on any feedback received.

Agenda item 1. Opening

1. On behalf of the Technical Committee (TC), Mr Hichem Azafzaf, the Vice-Chair, opened the meeting.

Agenda item 2. Welcome Address

2. Acting AEWA Executive Secretary, Marco Barbieri thanked the Ghana Wildlife Commission for hosting the meeting and welcomed the meeting participants. This was followed by a brief introduction round.

Agenda item 3. Modus Operandi of the TC

3. AEWA Technical Officer Sergey Dereliev reminded the Committee members of the rules of procedure of the Committee to which slight changes were introduced at the 5th Meeting of the AEWA Parties in May this year [TC 11.2]. The introduced changes mainly concerned the modification of deadlines to ensure a smoother operation of the TC.

Agenda item 4. Adoption of the Agenda and Work Programme

4. Mr Azafzaf requested the TC to adopt the agenda [TC 11.3] and work programme [TC 11.4].

5. Mr David Stroud requested that a short report on the Global Inter-flyway Network (GIN) meeting be added to the agenda as an information item under Agenda item 19. Any Other Business.

Decision: The Meeting adopted the Agenda and Work Programme with the above-mentioned amendment.

Agenda item 5. Admission of Observers

Decision: The Meeting agreed to admit the Observers present (see Annex 1 – document TC Inf.11.6 Provisional List of Participants) and welcomed them to the meeting.

Agenda item 6. Election of Officers

Decision: The Meeting elected the regional representative from North and South-Western Europe, Mr David Stroud, as the new Chair of the Technical Committee. Mr Azafzaf was re-elected to continue as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

Agenda item 7. Reports by the Regional Representatives

6. Mr Stroud requested the TC Regional Representatives to report on the implementation of AEWA in their respective regions.

Central Europe, Dr. Lorenzo Serra

7. Of fourteen countries contacted, six replies were received. There are no major ongoing waterbird conservation initiatives in the region at the moment. Many countries reported high mortality in waterbirds due to the cold winter. On the other hand, high goose numbers were reported throughout the region.

8. Croatia is in the process of developing a new nature protection act, which will be more in line with the EU Birds Directive and is continuing with the national monitoring of waterbirds. Macedonia reported that the

national NGOs and scientific bodies are not receiving financial support from the government or donors for the implementation of the Agreement.

9. The Ezerani nature reserve, located around the Prespa Lake in Macedonia, has been downgraded to a national park which potentially poses a serious threat to migratory waterbirds, such as pelicans and the Ferruginous Duck. In general, the situation within the Central Balkan countries with regard to waterbird conservation appears to be very critical.

10. Romania and Italy reported no significant progress since the last meeting. In Italy national action plans have been adopted for some AEWA species such as the Pygmy Cormorant and the Kentish Plover. Seashore habitat remains most vulnerable in Italy due to tourism and many species using seashore habitats are in decline. Italy is also planning a reintroduction of the White-headed Duck in Sicily.

North and South-Western Europe, Dr. David Stroud

11. From this region, Canada, Andorra and Lichtenstein are still not Parties to AEWA, but Iceland is working on acceding to the Agreement within the next 12 months. EU legislation has huge significance within this region, however some threats remain. The public debt crisis has led to public agencies cutting down their expenditure which has negatively impacted the development of protected sites to name one example. Additional challenges include continued measures to control the spread of the Ruddy Duck, the lack of policy preparedness in the face of climate change as well as the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands.

12. A significant number of Action Plans are being implemented and there is a good degree of implementation in general. Key issues for the region include the EU special protection area network, which is of great importance. Yet there is no very good audit of what these protected areas contain and of what happens outside of the protected areas, for example in the way of agricultural intensification.

Eastern Europe, Mr Saulius Svazas

13. Feedback was received from eight countries. The Baltic States are all members of the European Union and hence conservation activities are focused around the implementation of the EU Birds Directive and the management of Natura 2000 sites. New initiatives include the development and implementation of national plans for several AEWA species. Major threats reported include climate change, as important waterbird habitats in the Baltic Sea area are changing rapidly.

14. Ukraine reported the implementation of a major project “Integrating climate change into vulnerable ecosystems” as well as continued implementation of the Emerald network site project. Three new Ramsar sites are to be designated. Threats mentioned included habitat loss as well as lacking enforcement of conservation policies. Georgia faces severe problems in implementing activities under the Agreement, one of the reasons being the lack of legislation prohibiting spring hunting. Threats to waterbirds include the inadequate treatment and disposal of sewage.

15. Main threats reported from Azerbaijan include the rising water levels of the Caspian Sea, as well as the continued pollution of the Caspian Sea from oil leakages. Armenia reported a drastic drop in water levels at Lake Sevan which is affecting waterbird habitats. Belarus has implemented a restoration scheme for wetlands with more than 30.000 hectares restored. The country plans to join AEWA by MOP6 and has expressed interest in having a national accession workshop facilitated by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. Threats reported in Russia include habitat loss in the breeding areas due to oil and gas developments etc. (Illegal) Hunting is also still a major threat as well as climate change. Russia is preparing to join AEWA with a meeting on the possible accession planned for December 2012.

Northern Africa, Mr Hichem Azafzaf

16. Regular waterbird monitoring occurs in a majority of the countries in the region and most countries reported on their mid-winter counts. An atlas of the waterbirds of Libya was launched at the AEWA MOP5. Tunisia has designated fifteen Ramsar sites and has produced management plans for three important

wetlands. A training course was organised in Tunisia for identifying and counting waterbirds in Africa and a national network for waterbirds counts was established in Algeria. Tunisia also organised events during WMBD 2012. A first field guide on the identification of waterbirds in North Africa has been produced in Arabic and will be available at the end of September 2012. Current threats include the political unrest in the region as well as pollution and uncontrolled use. Tunisia reported a case of waterbird mortality, where an estimated 1000 waterbirds were found dead in wetlands in the North of Tunisia, due to avian botulism

Eastern Africa, Mr Muchai Samuel Muchane

17. Of the non-Party States in the region, South Sudan and Rwanda are in the process of acceding to the Agreement. The main threats in the region include pressure on land, lack of wetlands policies, agriculture, pollution, deforestation, water regulation and irrigation activities, windfarms and expanding power grids, hunting, recreation/tourism as well as poor waste management. There has also been an increase in droughts, which is most likely linked to climate change. Toxic chemicals are specifically a threat to waterbirds in South Sudan. Invasive alien species such as the water hyacinth also continues to be a threat. Ethiopia and Sudan have banned the use of lead shot, yet pesticide hunting with *Furadan* still occurs throughout the region.

18. Several AEWA Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) are being implemented in the region and an SSAP drafting workshop for the Shoebill is being organised in Uganda in October. Education and awareness-raising activities are being carried out by different NGOs but larger initiatives – such as the organisation of training, using the WOW training kit – are lacking due to the absence of funds. Other issues linked to conservation include poverty, population growth, and the need for a general wetland policy. The threat to Lake Natron continues as the Government of Tanzania aims to continue with mining activities.

Southern Africa, Dr. Mark Brown

19. Replies were received from two countries - both reported no major threats. In South Africa, policies on invasive alien species are being developed on ducks. Lead shot is not seen as a big threat in the region. The Seychelles are experiencing problems with land reclamation which is destroying wetlands. South Africa is also experiencing some problems caused by mining affecting crane populations. Water quality problems at the artificial breeding site created for the Lesser Flamingo at Kamfers Dam has led to a decline of birds frequenting the site. The region has also seen an increase in the development of renewable energy projects. A large windfarm project has been approved in Lesotho in a major migratory area used by waterbirds. Best practice guidelines have been produced by BirdLife on windfarms and BirdLife is also producing sensitivity mapping.

20. Conservation initiatives include a captive breeding programme for Wattled Cranes with supplementation of the wild population set to start in two years. South Africa is listing the White-winged Flufftail as critically endangered. A captive breeding facility is being built at the Johannesburg zoo and funding proposals are being put together for the species.

21. Research and monitoring activities in South Africa include bi-annual counts of large wetlands in the country. Data from these counts is available online. The South Africa Atlas bird project is ongoing and will cover 63% of the country. There is also an ongoing Important Bird Area project in South Africa and 103 of the sites designated are used by waterbirds. South Africa is still running some training programmes under AFRING, but no funding is available to really implement the scheme.

Southwestern Asia, Mr Sharif Jbour

22. The region has six Contracting Parties to AEWA and Saudi Arabia and Iraq are expected to possibly accede to AEWA soon. The main threat in the region is mass hunting. Due to the Arab Spring there has, however, recently been a decrease in the hunting of birds in the region. Other threats include land development in and around wetlands as well as dam projects.

23. Current conservation activities include the Migratory Soaring Birds Project and the production of sensitivity mapping for migratory birds. In addition, implementation of the two key Single Species Action

Plans in the region (Sociable Lapwing and Northern Bald Ibis) is ongoing. Nature Iraq is producing a national site inventory bringing together seven years of collected data. Efforts to revitalise monitoring schemes following the IWC scheme are ongoing. There is no available data on possible effects of climate change on waterbird populations in the region and none of the key stakeholders are currently conducting activities related to climate change.

Western Africa, Dr. Erasmus Owusu

24. Unfortunately, no feedback was received from any of the seventeen countries in the region. Current activities in Ghana include the ringing of waders and capacity building in bird monitoring and management. Awareness-raising efforts are being led by the Ghana Wildlife Society, which is the national BirdLife Partner and include the publishing of a “Birds of Ghana” book with the local names of bird species. The main threats to waterbirds in Ghana are mostly linked to human development (such as harvesting firewood from mangroves, dumping of refuse and household waste into wetlands and runoff from agriculture into wetlands).

Discussion

25. Mr Stroud thanked all regional representatives for their reports and requested that they consider the new format for the regional reports [TC 11.5] and whether any other information should be reported on. There were no comments and the format was adopted.

26. Mr Svazas commented that in some cases receiving feedback from focal points is difficult and enquired whether the Secretariat could assist with this. Mr Dereliev encouraged regional representatives to copy in the Secretariat when sending out requests for information so that contact to the focal points can be facilitated if needed. The meeting agreed that regional reports should be submitted to the Secretariat before the meeting. Mr Stroud concluded by stating that the reporting format could be revisited before the next TC meeting if deemed necessary.

Decision: The Meeting adopted the proposed revised format for the Reports by the Regional Representatives. It was also decided that, if necessary, the format will be reviewed again before the next TC meeting. In future, Regional Representatives are to submit their reports to the Secretariat in advance of TC meetings.

Agenda item 8. Report of the Secretariat

27. Mr Barbieri briefly presented the report of the AEWA Secretariat [TC 11.6].

28. Ms Marianne Courouble (France) commented that the CMS Future Shape process will have some implications for the work of the AEWA TC and that TC members should be duly informed of such implications. This could be handled in the form of a report from the CMS Secretariat on those Future Shape issues which will have an effect on the Technical Committee. Mr Barbieri replied that the relevant CMS COP 10 resolutions would be circulated to meeting participants. Mr Borja Heredia (CMS Secretariat) added that the Online Reporting Tool, the new workspaces as well as the new CMS Family website are all being developed in the spirit of the Future Shape report.

29. Ms Courouble also inquired why such a low number of project applications had been received so far under the AEWA Small Grants Fund and whether the application deadline had been extended. Mr Barbieri replied that it is unclear why so few applications had been received to date. However, unless further voluntary contributions are provided, the Secretariat only has 20.000€ to fund projects in this cycle. Mr Muchane requested that the TC regional representatives be made aware of the Small Grants Fund calls in order to facilitate more project applications. Mr Stroud agreed that advertising the Small Grants Fund through the regional representatives could open up access to new expert networks.

30. Ms Courouble also inquired whether the African “training of trainers” workshops mentioned in the report would be organised in francophone African countries. Mr Barbieri clarified that the workshops in question

are being organised within the framework of the joint CMS and AEWA Capacity Building project being funded by the EU. Training sessions for francophone African countries are already being scheduled in consultation with other projects, for example with the MAVA foundation.

Decision: The Meeting took note of the report provided by the Secretariat.

Agenda item 9. AEWA Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs)

Prioritisation of AEWA populations for Action Planning

31. Mr Dereliev briefly presented the draft priority list of AEWA populations for the development of future action plans [TC 11.7]. He requested the TC to consider the priority list and the approach applied, where species had been ranked according to their IUCN Red List status, population size and trend estimates. The TC was then requested to approve the list as mandated by the AEWA MOP.

32. Mr Baz Hughes (WWT) commented that the Red List status should be applied for species at sub-population level. Unfortunately performing such a ranking for all AEWA populations is a huge task. Mr Hughes suggested, however, that the TC should consider doing this for the globally threatened species. Mr Stroud commented that an assessment of all species on sub-population level was not realistic at the moment. Mr Hughes further suggested that a separate prioritisation should be made for huntable species in need of AEWA Management Plans, such as the Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis*). Mr Arto Marjakangas (CIC) added that he has been requested by the Finnish Ministry of Agriculture to further the development of an AEWA International Management Plan for the Taiga Bean Goose and that the Ministry has resources available to support this process. Mr Hughes added that WWT is very interested to help with the development of a Species Action Plan or Management Plan for the Bean Goose, for example by facilitating an expert workshop.

33. Mr Szabolcs Nagy (Wetlands International) remarked that in general the prioritisation method used is correct, except in the case of the globally near-threatened species. Mr Nagy suggested that the huntable and non-huntable species listed under AEWA should be separated. Ms Nicola Crockford (BirdLife International) agreed in general with the list, but noted that some of the species listed in Table 2 already have EU Action Plans. Mr Dereliev replied that the Secretariat is aware of these plans, but many of them are outdated and none cover the entire flyway of the species concerned. In addition none of them are currently being actively implemented.

34. Mr Stroud suggested that vulnerability to climate change could be added as a fourth criterion in the prioritisation, as identified in the AEWA Climate Change Conservation Guidelines. Mr Nagy argued that the change in ranking would probably be minimal, but Mr Dereliev concluded that the climate change criteria could be applied to see what change it would bring in the prioritisation list.

35. Ms Crockford added that RSPB is ready to provide a full-time Coordinator for the Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*), also for the development of an AEWA Single Species Action Plan. A workshop for the development of the Action Plan could be held in conjunction with the next Waders Study Group meeting taking place in Wilhelmshaven in 2013. Mr Dereliev thanked the Finnish government and RSPB for their generous offers to provide resources for the development of these two plans.

36. Mr Hughes added that some AEWA Range States are in the process of developing and adopting national or regional harvest programs for waterbirds and that there is a need for AEWA conservation guidelines on adaptive harvest management based on the AEWA Management Plan for the Pink-footed Goose to guide these activities.

37. Mr Harradine (BASC) raised the question whether the implementation of AEWA Action Plans is being sufficiently monitored. Mr Dereliev replied that a report attempting to assess the implementation was submitted to MOP4. With the introduction of SSAP coordinators, the Secretariat hopes that more precise assessments of the implementation will be possible in future. The next implementation report is to be submitted to MOP6.

38. Ms Crockford inquired whether there should be a kind of hybrid plan for species which are endangered but still legally huntable. Mr Dereliev replied that the action planning process would, in such cases, probably come to the conclusion that a species recovery plan – not a management plan - is needed.

Decision: The Secretariat was requested to revise the list following the two suggestions made by the Technical Committee: the separation between huntable and non-huntable species and adding vulnerability to climate change as a fourth prioritisation criterion (as outlined in the AEWA conservation guidelines on climate change) and present the revised list to the present meeting.

Report by the Secretariat on the revision of prioritisation of AEWA populations for Action Planning

39. Mr Dereliev presented the revised lists; the first prioritisation list was for huntable species in need of AEWA Species Management Plans. This list was extracted from Table 2 of Doc. TC 11.7 and includes those populations open to hunting (i.e. populations in Column A, Category 4, Categories 2 and 3 marked with an asterisk and those in Column B in Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan): The list consists of populations belonging to the following species, according to category:

Globally threatened: Velvet Scoter and Long-tailed Duck
Near Threatened: Eurasian Curlew and Cape Cormorant
Least Concern: Taiga Bean Goose and White-backed Duck

40. The Meeting agreed that the Cape Cormorant was an exception (the only population of which is in Column A, Category 4), as it is not hunted and should therefore remain on the prioritisation list for Single Species Action Planning

41. Mr Dereliev went on to introduce the revised prioritisation list for the development of Single Species Action Plans including the vulnerability of climate change as a fourth prioritisation criterion. This criterion was classified as high, moderate or low, according to the report on climate change presented to MOP4. This was followed by a re-shuffling of the species according to the population trend categories. The Meeting agreed with this approach to prioritisation.

Decision: The Meeting approved both revised lists and requested the Secretariat to finalise them and to post them on the TC Workspace for final comments, before publishing them on the AEWA website.

Terms of Reference for International Species Expert Groups

42. Mr Dereliev presented TC document [TC 11.8 Corr.1] on the Draft Terms of Reference for International Species Expert Groups. The main differences to the AEWA International Species Working Groups are that the Expert Groups will not be of a strictly intergovernmental nature and that the AEWA Secretariat will not be directly involved in the work of these Groups. Coordinators are, however, foreseen to be appointed and the Expert Groups will also be expected to report back to the AEWA Meeting of the Parties on implementation progress made. Funding of the activities of the Expert Groups is to be arranged by the participating range states and organisations.

43. Two Species Expert Groups for AEWA species are already in operation, namely the Irish Light-bellied Brent Goose Working Group and the Eurosite Working Group on the Eurasian Spoonbill. These two groups are invited to consider a closer linkage to AEWA by adopting these new Terms of Reference and thereby committing to light reporting obligations.

44. Mr Hughes (WWT) raised some questions concerning the practical initiation of future Expert Groups and inquired whether AEWA focal points should be invited to join the groups as a matter of course and whether the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would be sending out the initial invitations for the groups to lend them more credibility. In addition, Mr Hughes inquired whether the Secretariat is planning to sign Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the coordinating bodies of the Expert Groups. Mr Dereliev replied that all these

suggestions can be implemented, but that the factual difference between the two types of groups would then in fact be minimal and would again require a closer involvement of the Secretariat which has very limited capacity.

45. Mr Hughes also inquired whether the Technical Committee should also draft and adopt generic Terms of Reference for the AEWA Species Management Groups. Mr Dereliev replied that considering there is currently only one Species Management Group in place with a potential second one of the horizon for the Taiga Bean Goose, there does not seem to be a great hurry in producing generic ToRs at this stage. Mr Hughes also highlighted that it had been decided to omit the appointment of core Working Group members in the ToR, as experience shows that a small number of key people usually get together and do the work in any case.

46. Mr Stroud (Chair) suggested that the wording on the funding of working group activities in the draft ToR might be slightly adjusted, and suggested changing it to “*Financing of EG activities will be funded by its members.*”

Decision: The Technical Committee adopted the generic ToR for International Species Expert Groups under AEWA taking into account the slight re-wording mentioned above. In addition, it was agreed to further discuss and clarify the exact initiation process for the Expert Groups with the Secretariat.

Agenda item 10. Brainstorming Session

47. Before breaking off into the workshops of the different TC Working Groups, Mr Stroud led the meeting in a brainstorming exercise in order to encourage participants to identify issues currently not being dealt with by the TC or that the TC should increase its focus on. Mr Stroud emphasised that the TC should also be proactive in its advice to the AEWA Parties and should therefore not only focus on dealing with issues handed down by the Parties to the TC. Participants were asked to answer the following three questions:

- a. *In your experience, what are the top two threats negatively influencing migratory waterbirds?*
- b. *Irrespective of the current TC workplan, what are the key issues that the TC should be addressing?*
- c. *If you could make one thing happen, how would you make AEWA (Contracting Parties, AEWA Secretariat or the TC) more effective?*

48. Mr Stroud then presented the conclusions of the brainstorming session and identified five cross-cutting themes in the suggestions presented by meeting participants.

1. AEWA should increasingly be working with and through others (MEAs, other international organisations, processes etc.). AEWA should concentrate on those issues which are unique to its mandate and where the Agreement can make a difference.
2. Habitat loss and degradation were clearly signalled out as central drivers for change in waterbird populations. What should our response be? Do we know which the key areas are within the AEWA region where we should concentrate our efforts? An analysis of the areas being used by threatened species under AEWA would be very useful in this respect.
3. Hunting and taking as well as AEWA’s unique role on the verge of the hunting and conservation communities was emphasised. There is a wide range of sustainable use issues where AEWA is particularly well placed to be active.
4. Targeting of communications and guidance was also highlighted. Who is the audience for our work and how do we target them most effectively?

5. Changing conservation challenges such as climate change, coastal squeeze and the impacts of development and human population change, mean that the TC also needs to focus on anticipating upcoming problems and issues and to consider how to tackle them.

49. Mr Stroud further commented that it would be interesting to follow the method of organising work currently being used by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)² under the headings assessments, knowledge needs, tools for decision makers and capacity building. Mr Davidson (Ramsar Secretariat) continued by stating that now is the time for the MEAs to prepare to engage with IPBES and to use the potential offered by this platform. Coordinated advice from the MEAs should go to IPBES in order to ensure that the information it produces will feed into the needs of ongoing intergovernmental work.

50. Mr Stroud commented that AEWA already has its own assessment process (international reviews) and that the TC should consider how closer links between these reviews and IPBES can be facilitated. Mr Davidson added that the IPBES process needs access to existing processes and reviews in order to be able to feedback relevant studies to the MEAs.

Agenda items 11.-14. Concurrent Workshops of TC Working Groups 1-9

51, *The outcomes of the concurrent workshops of the TC Working Groups were presented to the plenary under Agenda item 15.*

Agenda item 15. Recapitulation of Workshops of TC Working Groups 1-9

Working Group 1. Hunting

52. Mr Angus Middleton (FACE) briefly reported on the outcomes of the workshop. Several tasks linked to sustainable harvest were given a high priority. The majority of these tasks should be captured in the revision of the Conservation Guidelines on Sustainable Harvesting, for which Terms of Reference would be prepared by Mr Middleton and Mr Mondain-Monval. In addition WWT is preparing a list on species at risk of lead poisoning for the CMS Working Group on poisoning meeting in June 2013. A short paper on adaptive harvest management will also be prepared by Mr Hughes (WWT). The establishment of a list of look-alike species was given a low priority.

Working Group 2. National Reporting, Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets

53. Ms Melissa Lewis (TC Environmental Law expert) briefly presented the outcomes of the workshop. The planned revision of the national reporting format has to be ready by the end of 2013 at the latest. The Secretariat will consolidate the feedback received after MOP5 in September 2012 and will make it available to the WG. The Secretariat will also go through the resolutions and extract all new reporting requirements as defined by MOP5. All draft questions from other Working Groups should be submitted to WG2 by the end of 2012.

54. As for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the TC is to work together with the Standing Committee to assess progress on issues relevant to the AICHI Targets, and to present triennial assessments of AEWA's contribution to each of the relevant Aichi Targets, elaborating further needs as necessary and appropriate, as an agenda item for each future MOP through to 2020. Relevant information from the national reports will be used to produce an assessment of AEWA's contribution to be presented at MOP6. The WG will also work on developing a modular approach to national reporting on site networks and population status. Higher priority is on the site network modules, so that these can feed into the next site network report.

55. Other WG2 tasks include the harmonisation of reporting formats with other MEAs through coordination between the Secretariats as well as the development of the analytical tool led by the UNEP/AEWA

² <http://www.ipbes.net/>

Secretariat and UNEP-WCMC. The Secretariat will produce draft Terms of Reference to be circulated to the WG for comments as soon as sufficient funding is available.

56. Mr Stroud noted that the analytical tool is very important and that perhaps its development could be undertaken together with other MEAs on a cost sharing basis. Mr Dereliev commented that there are currently no other users of the system, except for the Ramsar Information Sheets. Mr Davidson replied that Ramsar sees two potential uses for the online submission tool: a re-developed Ramsar site database as well as national reporting. Ramsar is considering the option of moving to the ORS in the next national reporting cycle.

57. It was generally agreed that although it would be good to share costs for the analytical tool with other MEAs; AEWAs and WCMC could also work together to move ahead and raise funds without other MEAs joining up. Ms Cremona (WCMC) commented that CITES has expressed its interest in the ORS and analytical tool and would, therefore, possibly be able to help raise funds.

58. Ms Lewis presented the final WG2 task, which is the assessment of progress towards reaching the targets set out in the AEWAs Strategic Plan. A number of targets in the Strategic Plan have not yet been assessed. The vast majority of targets and indicators can best be answered through the national reporting format. For a few targets/indicators additional material will be required.

59. Mr Stroud highlighted that all changes to the national reporting format need to be finished well before the next TC meeting in 2014 via the workspace and reminded all TC members to remain engaged in the process.

Working Group 3. International Reviews

60. Mr Stroud briefly presented the outcomes of the workshop. Within this MOP cycle, five reviews specified in the Agreement text are to be completed, subject to sufficient funding being available. The WG prioritised the five reviews as follows:

61. The 6th Edition of the Conservation Status Report and the Site Network Review were given the highest priority to be completed in time for MOP6. A discussion on the Conservation Status Report (CSR) will be kicked off on the workspace and a definitive timeline is needed in order to ensure that the CSR is ready in time for the MOP. The Site Network Report is already available in a provisional format and the TC is requested to review the draft over the next months and identify where improvement might be needed with a focus on extracting key messages. The report will also require consultation with the AEWAs Parties which should take place in 2013. Also here the deadlines need to be fine-tuned in order to ensure timely delivery to the MOP. Mr Nagy (Wetlands International) highlighted that a new reporting module is needed to support the Site Network Report and that the development of the module requires funding to ensure its availability for use by Contracting Parties in 2013.

62. The planned update of the Review on the Implementation of Single Species Action Plans was given second priority. As a first step, the WG will produce a draft vision on how a common Species Action Plan assessment could work and will invite CMS and the Bern Convention to collaborate.

63. Third priority was given to an update on the Review of Invasive Alien Species. Due to the very detailed nature of the last report, it was deemed unlikely that there would be resources to repeat such an extensive exercise. In addition the submitted national reports confirm that there are only major issues with half a dozen species. Hence work in this area should focus on these identified key species. Terms of Reference will therefore be produced for a highly focused piece of work. The WG will also look into possible linkages with the Ramsar STRP in working towards the production of invasive species for wetland managers.

64. The Review on Knowledge and Information Gaps was given last priority. As the issue is being covered quite frequently in other AEWAs documents, the WG would merely draft Terms of Reference for a simple review compiling this information.

Working Group 4. Waterbird Monitoring

65. Mr Nagy briefly reported on the outcomes of the workshop. The WG will focus on how monitoring activities can be developed more strategically. The WG will expand table one with additional data on the appropriate times and methods to monitor populations. This task will be completed in the first quarter of 2013. The WG will also compile conservation guidelines on how to develop monitoring programmes in order to streamline monitoring to ensure that all countries follow the same criteria when doing surveys.

66. The WG will identify priorities in waterbird monitoring and analyse where it is worth strengthening monitoring efforts. This will include identifying AEWA populations which are still lacking monitoring prioritising species of global conservation concern. The WG will also be kept informed on progress with the Waterbird Monitoring Partnership. Wetlands International might need funding (10.000 €) for developing guidance for species where no monitoring guidance is available, for example for colonial breeding birds.

Working Group 5. Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA)

67. Mr Davidson briefly presented the outcomes of the workshop. The first WG task will be to draft Terms of Reference for the CEPA expert to be recruited to the TC. The WG is also expected to provide input to the review and revision of the AEWA Communication Strategy. The Secretariat will lead on the review process once funding is available. The WG expects all TC members to contribute to the work of the CEPA group.

68. Mr Hughes commented that the goal of the new strategy should be clear. The present strategy lacks strategic advocacy work as well as an educational approach. A renewed strategy should also include a more pro-active awareness-raising approach, for example encouraging Parties to implement AEWA guidelines, as well as communication between MEAs. Mr Florian Keil (AEWA Information Officer) added that the communication strategy review needs to be completed by MOP6. The Secretariat will draft Terms of Reference for the consultant once funds are available for the review. The revised strategy can take elements from the old, but can also take a more proactive approach. Mr Keil requested all TC members to send recommendations to the Secretariat on possible CEPA experts.

69. Mr Nagy commented that communication management advice seems to be what is needed and that a general communicator should be found rather than a purely technical expert. Ms Crockford added that the contact details of one of the main communications people at RSPB have been forwarded to the Secretariat.

70. A task on engagement in the future implementation of the Global Inter-flyway Network (GIN) has also been added under WG5. The Secretariat is expected to lead on this task together with the CEPA expert once elected to the AEWA TC. The task will include supporting GIN and delivering to the network itself, identifying priority issues for future AEWA implementation and utilization of the GIN network as well as identifying where AEWA tools and best practice could be made available in order to increase capacity within other flyways. Mr Stroud added that in this context, the consolidated TC workplan should be circulated to the other flyway initiatives for information. In addition the results of the workshop in Korea are to be posted on the TC workspace.

71. Mr Stroud added that the format of the conservation guidelines should be considered by the CEPA group and future CEPA expert.

Working Group 6. Conservation Guidelines

72. Dr. Brown briefly presented the outcomes of the WG. The WG will produce a guide to guidelines relevant to AEWA. The WG will also be contacting AEWA Focal Points for feedback to assess AEWA guidelines produced so far. In addition the WG will prepare Terms of Reference for the revision of AEWA Conservation Guidelines No.1 (National Species Action Plans) as well as finalise the Conservation Guidelines on Hunting and Trade Legislation, which are at an advanced stage.

Working Group 7. Climate Change

73. Mr Stroud briefly presented the outcomes of the workshop. WG tasks include the review of existing experience on adaptation management, the identification of sites particularly vulnerable to climate change (specification to be worked on progressively within the next six months together with CMS and the Ramsar Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP).

74. Mr Nagy suggested undertaking a GIS query exercise using the CSN tool in order to detect the sites which have been identified as climate sensitive. In order to assess water management and land use changes at sites, more information is needed. Mr Davidson added that Ramsar is already working on a vulnerability report and that it would be valuable for AEWA to link into it. The Ramsar STRP has been working on a modelling of coastal Ramsar sites, which will be published soon in the form of a Ramsar Briefing Note. The current inaccuracy in available data sets is, however, a major hurdle in producing this kind of analysis.

75. Mr Stroud cautioned that there is a need to be careful that any work done in this area under AEWA is complementary to work going on under other MEAs in order to avoid overlaps. Mr Davidson added that not only are other MEAs involved - many other international organisations are doing this kind of modelling, for example within the climate change community. The implications for waterbirds should be fed into work already being done by others. Ms Cremona mentioned that WCMC are also involved in similar studies, such as a literature review based on terrestrial freshwater species and would, therefore, be interested in getting involved with other related projects.

Working Group 8. Renewable Energy and Migratory Waterbirds

76. Mr Stroud briefly presented the outcomes of the workshop. Mr Dereliev suggested that the TC take part in a review being developed between the CMS Family and IRENA on renewable energies and migratory species as this project will cover the tasks set out for the WG to a great extent. Developing a second project would be a clear duplication. The Terms of Reference need to be commented on within the next week. In response to inquiries about the relevance of the review to migratory waterbirds, Mr Dereliev replied that the review indeed will not be limited to one taxonomic group, but that it is set to be highly relevant to waterbirds. Mr Stroud concurred with Mr Dereliev and requested the Secretariat to post a reminder on the workspace.

Working Group 9. Disturbance

77. The WG will discuss the definition of disturbance and plan to complete the exercise within three months. In addition the WG will prepare Terms of Reference for a synthesis on the scientific knowledge of disturbance to use as a basis for the preparation of guidance on the definition of disturbance; this is expected to take 12 months to complete.

78. Ms Crockford inquired whether there is guidance already available and whether the TC should rather work on compiling a guide to guidance. Dr. Brown replied that there are actually no comprehensive studies or guidance available, so there is the need for something new.

Agenda item 16. Working Group 10 Emerging Issues

10.1 Extractive industries

79. Mr Stroud reported that the Ramsar STRP had prepared a guide to guidance, thereby evaluating and collecting guidance on minerals extraction around the world. This draft Ramsar Technical Report will be sent to the TC for review. Mr Stroud requested the members of the TC to comment on this report.

80. Another ongoing project is a low cost, desk top methodology for identifying wetlands particularly at risk from extractive industries, whereby mining hotspots are overlaid by geographical locations of waterbirds.

10.2 Monitoring the Implementation of the Powerlines Guidelines

81. The meeting agreed that the TC should focus on identifying and disseminating best practice cases with regard to the Guidelines on How to Avoid or Mitigate the Impact of Electricity Power Grids on Migratory Waterbirds in the African-Eurasian Region, adopted by MOP5 in May 2012. In addition a question on the implementation of guidelines should be included in the national reporting format.

10.3 Poisoning and Agrochemicals

82. Mr Borja Heredia (CMS Secretariat) reported that within the framework of the CMS Working Group on poisoning, the United Kingdom has promised funding for an assessment of the threat of poisoning to migratory species. Within this assessment there is good potential for cooperation with AEWA on the issue of lead poisoning and migratory waterbirds. Due to lack of funding, a first meeting of the Working Group has yet to take place, but a meeting could be organised during the second half of 2013 if funds are made available.

83. Ms Crockford (BirdLife International) was particularly interested in this. Mr Dereliev added that agrochemicals remain an important issue and that the Secretariat will try to continue to be involved in this work. All TC Members will have the opportunity to provide comments via the workspace. Ms Crockford and Mr Dereliev will keep the TC informed via the workspace. Mr Stroud concluded that a short summary on AEWA-related work in this area is to be provided by the Secretariat.

10.4 Regional Multi-Species Declines

84. Mr Dereliev noted that one of the priorities for this triennium is to finalise the Multi-species Action Plan for southern African seabirds. Mr Nagy (Wetlands International) commented that based on experience there are quite a few approaches to multi-species conservation, such as habitat action plans and multi-species action plans. The TC could opt to put together a short review on how such problems have been tackled in the past and what the pre-conditions are for each approach. Mr Davidson (Ramsar Secretariat) inquired what groups of birds are in decline across the region and whether any analysis has been carried out on patterns in the AEWA region and where the main drivers for decline along the flyway are.

85. Mr Dereliev added that the Secretariat will continue discussions with BirdLife South Africa on the development of the Multi-species Action Plan for southern African seabirds. The Secretariat will start fundraising and hopefully a workshop can be held in early 2014. Mr Stroud concluded that the short review could be done internally whereas the wider analysis would be a suitable subject for a Masters' thesis.

10.5 Taxonomy and nomenclature

86. Mr Stroud noted that the TC needs to be ready to feed into the ongoing CMS Scientific Council process on bird taxonomy and nomenclature. Mr Dereliev added that so far no decision on the taxonomic reference to be adopted has been taken under CMS. The CMS Scientific Council Chair has been given the task of bringing together all relevant stakeholders to discuss the possibility of harmonisation of the bird taxonomies across the MEAs. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will remain involved and follow the process and will keep the TC informed. Mr Heredia (UNEP/CMS Secretariat) added that a meeting is planned for 2013.

10.6 Breeding and pre-nuptial migration periods

87. Mr Stroud concluded that this should not be a high priority. If new information becomes available, the TC will pass it on to the AEWA Parties.

Discussion on additional emerging issues

88. Ms Courouble (France) inquired whether it would be possible to add IPBES and habitat destruction to the list of emerging issues. Mr Stroud replied that there – also as a result of the brainstorming exercise – indeed seems to be a need for the addition of some new issues to list. Mr Stroud suggested setting up a discussion on the workspace to gather ideas on what could be done on new issues. Mr Davidson (Ramsar) added that

agriculture and the effects it is having on waterbirds and their habitats should also be included as a new issue, as this is a joint issue for Ramsar and AEWA. It was decided to create a common Ramsar and AEWA Working Group on the issue.

Decision: To establish a joint working group with Ramsar STRP on habitat loss and degradation.

10.7 Invasive aquatic weeds

89. Mr Stroud stressed the importance of cooperation with other MEAs on the compilation of a guide to the available guidelines, particularly with the Ramsar STRP, which has an identical task.

10.8 Traditional knowledge and harvest

90. Mr Dereliev will upload the paper drafted several years ago by the IUCN Environmental Law Centre on Traditional Management of Waterbirds – the case of Lake Chilwa, Malawi, onto the TC workspace, for further assessment by the TC. This paper has already received substantial comments, which need to be addressed.

10.9 Emerging diseases

91. Mr Stroud confirmed that this task is ongoing in that the TC is participating in the new CMS ScC WG on wildlife diseases.

10.10 Consumptive harvest and sustainability

92. This issue was examined by WG1 on Lead, hunting and trade and will be dealt with under Task 1.7.

10.11 Seabird bycatch

93. Ms Crockford agreed to provide the TC with links to relevant by-catch activities that she is involved in.

10.12 Transnational corporations

94. Mr Stroud aims to establish contacts through a discussion on the TC workspace. to plan this work. Mr Davidson pointed out that the Ramsar COP has adopted a resolution on responsible investment, so there might be room for collaboration on this issue as well. Mr Nagy suggested that the TC identify key players within sectors of interest to the Agreement - adding that Wetlands International was in partnership with Shell - to look at potential cooperation and sites important for waterbirds and that BirdLife International works with the British multinational metals and mining corporation, Rio Tinto. These cooperations had come about as a result of the development of the CSN Tool and could lead to synergies for further measures.

Agenda item 17. TC Work Plan 2012-2015

95. Mr Stroud asked Working Group Chairs to complete their pro-formas on working group tasks and their prioritisation and to send them to the Secretariat as soon as possible. Mr Dereliev will compile them into one document to be posted on the workspace. TC members will then have two weeks to comment. Mr Stroud will produce a timeline of activities in order to monitor deadlines. He will check on progress made from time to time. Should Working Groups experience difficulties in implementing the prioritised activities, they are requested to let Mr Stroud and the Secretariat know in good time.

96. In addition Mr Stroud noted that where consultations with Contracting Parties are planned, these requests should be streamlined between WGs so that focal points are not bombarded. WGs also need to consider what types of products will be coming to the MOP from activities during 2013 at the latest.

97. Mr Stroud added that a growing workload has been handed to the TC by MOP5 and that it might be a good idea to get Parties to reflect on priorities for TC work. Stroud suggested that the next AEWA MOP be

presented with an indicative work programme with indicative priorities for the next inter-sessional period and to have the MOP confirm them. Mr Stroud concluded by thanking all meeting participants for their commitment to implement tasks and requested participants to stay engaged and active between TC meetings.

Decision: The TC workplan will be updated by the Secretariat and uploaded onto the TC workspace for final comments.

Agenda item 18. Date and venue of the next Technical Committee Meeting

98. Mr Dereliev explained that the TC will be meeting once more during this inter-sessional period to wrap up the work that is to be carried out during the next two years. The meeting will most likely take place in the second half of 2014, in order to finalise the work in time for MOP6. The Secretariat is waiting for feedback from Israel with regard to the possibility of hosting the next TC meeting.

Agenda item 19. Any Other Business

Global Inter-flyway Network (GIN)

99. Nick Davidson (Ramsar Secretariat) gave a brief presentation on the newly established Global Inter-flyway Network (GIN), which was established in 2011 at a workshop in South Korea that brought together existing flyway initiatives in an effort to establish a dialog between them. Outcomes of the workshop also include an information paper which was submitted to CMS COP10 as well as a full report, which was a joint CMS, AEWA, EAAFP and Ramsar publication.

100. The Global Inter-flyway Network now needs to be made operational, for example by developing a web-based decision forum for practitioners. The extraction of key messages and outputs from the full meeting report is in preparation, with the aim of providing an accessible “action agenda” in support of flyway initiatives in the future including a check-list for initiatives on what has been implemented and what could still be done.

101. Mr Stroud concurred that GIN is an extremely important initiative and that AEWA’s engagement should remain strong. Stroud suggested that GIN be added to the communications work within the TC. This clearly is one of the emerging issues that the AEWA MOP should be informed of. Mr Davidson added that there is a need for a follow-up workshop focusing on mapping out what exactly the current initiatives are covering and where there are gaps. Ms Crockford concurred with the suggestions made and added that the suggested activities could be followed up with a workshop on birds of prey and land birds.

102. Mr Hughes (WWT) highlighted the need for AEWA, CMS and Ramsar to support the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership in particular. The ongoing destruction of tidal flats along the flyway has led to a 60% decline in some species populations. Mr Nagy (Wetlands International) suggested that the products and conservation approaches developed under the WOW project be made available to the EAAFP. The Critical Site Network Tool could also be modified for their use. Mr Stroud requested that the TC Working Group on communications come up with tasks related to this topic to be added to the TC workplan for this triennium.

Decision: The Meeting decided to add cooperation with the Global Inter-flyway Network to the TC Workplan. The TC Working Group on communications (WG 5) will come up with tasks related to this topic to be added to the TC workplan

TC Workspace update

103. AEWA Information Officer, Florian Keil briefly presented the updated version of the AEWA Technical Committee Workspace, which is set to be operational by the end of September 2012.

Lesser White-fronted Goose Questions to be presented to the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group

104. Ms Nina Mikander (Coordinator for the Lesser White-fronted Goose SSAP) briefly presented draft questions on the conservation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose to be forwarded to the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group in preparation of the revision of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the species foreseen to be completed in 2013 (see Annex 2).

Decision: The Meeting endorsed the questions presented by the Secretariat. The Secretariat will forward the questions to the IUCN and report back to the TC on any feedback received.

Agenda item 20. Closure

105. Mr Stroud ended the meeting by thanking the hosts as well as the Secretariat. Mr Stroud also thanked all the meeting participants for their efforts and hard work and urged them to continue to provide input via the TC workspace. Mr Barbieri (AEWA Acting Executive Secretary) concurred with the thanks expressed by the Chair.

The meeting was closed.

ANNEX 1

Questions to the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group concerning the definition of the Swedish Lesser White-fronted Goose population

INTRODUCTION

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is approaching the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group for guidance on the basis of a recommendation from the AEWA Technical Committee concerning an issue related to the conservation of the globally threatened Lesser White-fronted Goose (*Anser erythropus*).

The issue in need of expert clarification concerns the definition of the small Swedish Lesser White-fronted Goose population which was supplemented/reintroduced in the early 1980s. Following a request submitted by Sweden to the AEWA Technical Committee in September 2011 (see Annex I) to amend certain text in the current Species Action Plan, the AEWA Technical Committee recommended that clarification on the definition issue should be sought from the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group. This advice is to be taken into account during the next revision of the Action Plan which will be launched in November 2012 and is to be completed in early 2013. The AEWA Technical Committee recommendation is attached as Annex II.

Following the rapid decline of the Lesser White-fronted Goose in Europe, Sweden embarked upon a captive-breeding programme in the late 1970s. The captive-bred young were imprinted on and released with Barnacle Goose (*Branta leucopsis*) foster parents. During migration the released Lesser White-fronted Geese followed the Barnacle Geese down to their wintering grounds in the Netherlands, thus creating a modified flyway for the Lesser White-fronted Geese and avoiding countries where the main threat of hunting was and partly still is imminent. A small remnant of the 'wild' Fennoscandian Lesser White-fronted Goose sub-population still breeds in northern Norway (numbering an estimated 80 individuals). The global Lesser White-fronted Goose population is currently estimated at 28.000-33.000 individuals.

The discovery of observations from the time of the first releases of captive bred Lesser White-fronted Geese for re-introduction in Swedish Lapland, which indicate that a small number of wild Fennoscandian birds were still present in the general area of release, raises the question of whether the conservation project in fact should be described as a 'supplementation' instead of a 're-introduction'. As a compromise between the Nordic Range States when drafting the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the Lesser White-fronted Goose (adopted in 2008), the Swedish population is currently referred to as supplemented/reintroduced.

The current conservation efforts for the species are very much focused on the remaining 'wild' Lesser White-fronted Goose populations. This also forms the basis of the AEWA Single Species Action Plan (http://www.unep-aewa.org/activities/working_groups/lwfg/lwfg_ssap_130109.pdf). Hence the definition or (re-definition) of the Swedish population can potentially have major effects on conservation policies.

Assisted by the AEWA Technical Committee, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat has prepared four specific questions concerning this delicate issue, on which we hope to receive guidance from the IUCN Reintroduction Specialist Group.

QUESTIONS FOR CLARIFICATION

1. For a conservation project releasing captive bred stock into the wild to be described a 're-enforcement/supplementation', is it a requirement that the released individuals mix with an existing wild population?
2. Can a [waterbird] conservation project which was originally carried out as a re-introduction (release of captive bred individuals into the wild using foster parents of a different species), later be formally described as a 'supplementation' on the basis of the discovery of old data indicating that a small number of birds from the former wild population still existed in the general area where the release took place?
3. Can a migratory waterbird population which uses a human-modified flyway partially lying outside of its known historical range be defined as 'supplemented' or even 're-introduced'?

What would be the most correct description of such a population which ensued by releasing captive bred young with foster parents from a different species, which then may or may not accidentally have come across remnants of the wild population and which now uses a human modified migration route, most parts of which lie outside the species' historical range?

ANNEX 2

11th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

27- 30 August 2012, Accra, Ghana

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE REGIONS

CENTRAL EUROPE

Dr Lorenzo SERRA
Researcher
Istituto Superiore per la Protezione e la Ricerca
Ambientale (ISPRA)
Via Ca' Fornacetta 9
400064 Ozzano Emilia BO
Italy

Tel.: + 39 051 651 2207
Fax: + 39 051 796 628
E-mail: lorenzo.serra@isprambiente.it

NORTH AND SOUTH WESTERN EUROPE

Mr David STROUD
Senior Ornithologist
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Monkstone House
City Road
Peterborough PE1 1JY
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 173 386 6810
Fax: +44 174 455 5948
E-mail: David.Stroud@jncc.gov.uk

EASTERN EUROPE

Dr Saulius SVAZAS
Senior Researcher
Lithuanian Nature Research Centre
Akadmijos 2
LT-08412 Vilnius
Lithuania

Tel.: +37 065 296 80
Fax: +37 052 729 296
E-mail: svazas@ekoi.lt

NORTHERN AFRICA

Mr Hichem AZAFZAF
Birds of Tunisia11
Rue Abou El Alla ElMaari
2080 Ariana
Tunis
Tunisia

Tel.: +216 232 072 38
E-mail: azafzaf@gnet.tn

EASTERN AFRICA

Dr Samuel Muchane MUCHAI
Senior Research Scientist and Head of Zoology
Department
National Museums of Kenya
Zoology Department
P.O. Box 40658
00100 Nairobi
Kenya

Tel.: +254 722 286 133
Fax: +254 203 74 1 424
E-mail: mmuchaim@yahoo.com/
mmuchai@museums.or.ke

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Dr Mark BROWN
Ornithologist
School of Life Sciences
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville 3201
South Africa

Tel.: +27 332 605 661
Fax: +27 865 152 114
E-mail: brownma@ukzn.ac.za

SOUTHWESTERN ASIA

Mr Sharif ALJBOUR
Regional IBA Coordinator
BirdLife International – Middle East Division
Amman-Khalda
Salameh Al Maa'ya Street
Building 6
P.O. Box 2295
Amman 11953
Jordan

Tel.: +962 655 481 73
Fax: +962 655 481 72
E-mail: sharif.jbour@birdlife.org

WESTERN AFRICA

Dr Erasmus Henaku OWUSU
Senior Lecturer
Dept. of Animal Biology & Conservation Science
University of Ghana
P.O. Box LG 67
Legon, Accra
Ghana

Tel.: +233 244 656 359
E-mail: Erasmus67@yahoo.com /
ehousu@ug.edu.gh

REPRESENTATIVES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL

Dr Szabolcs NAGY
Head of Strategy and Programme
Wetlands International
P.O. Box 471
6700AL Wageningen
The Netherlands

Tel.: +31 318 660 935
Fax: +31 318 660 935
E-mail: Szabolcs.nagy@wetlands.org

THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR GAME AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION / (CIC)

Dr Arto MARJANKANGAS
Project Manager
Finnish Wildlife Agency
Savontie 1316
FI-84880
Ylievieska
Finland

Tel.: +35 840 4503 784
E-mail: arto.marjakangas@riista.fi

THEMATIC EXPERTS

ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Ms Melissa LEWIS
Environmental Law Expert
University of Kwazulu-Natal (School of Law)
Howard College Building (Suite D)
King George V Avenue
Durban 4041
South Africa

Tel.: +27 3126 030 96 / +27 7422 801 111
Fax: +27 3176 748 57
E-mail: lewism@ukzn.ac.za

GAME MANAGEMENT

Mr Jean-Yves MONDAIN-MONVAL
Expert Game Management
Office national de la Chasse et de la faune
sauvage (ONCFS)
Le Sambuc
13200 Arles
France

Tel.: +33 490 972 790
Fax: +33 490 972 788
E-mail: jean-yves.mondain-monval@oncfs.gouv.fr

INVITED EXPERTS

EXPERT ON HUNTING ISSUES

Dr John HARRADINE
Director of Research
BASC
Marford Hill, Rosset
Wrexham L112 OHL
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 124 457 3016
Fax: +44 124 457 3013
E-mail: john.harradine@basc.org.uk

OTHER EXPERTS

UNEP-WCMC

Ms Patricia Cremona
Assistant Programme Officer
UNEP-WCMC
219 Huntingdon Road
Cambridge CB3 0DL
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 7745 835036
E-mail: patricia.cremona@unep-wcmc.org

RAMSAR CONVENTION SECRETARIAT

Prof. Nick DAVIDSON
Deputy Secretary General
Ramsar Convention Secretariat
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland
Switzerland

Tel.: +41 22 999 0171
Fax: +41 22 999 0169
E-mail: davidson@ramsar.org

LWfG INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP

Ms Nina MIKANDER
Coordinator for the
Lesser White-fronted Goose SSAP

E-mail:
nmikander@lesserwhitefrontedgoose.aewa.info

OBSERVERS FROM CONTRACTING PARTIES

DENMARK

Mr Thomas Eske HOLM
Research Biologist
Department of Bioscience
Aarhus University
Denmark

Tel.: +45 8715 8761 / +45 4046 3437

Fax: +45 8715 8902

E-mail: the@dmu.dk

FRANCE

Ms Marianne COUROUBLE
Chargée de mission – Affaires internationales
DGALN/DEB/PEM
Ministère de l'écologie, du développement
durable et de l'énergie (MEDDE)
Arche Sud
92055 La Défense cédex
France

Tel.: +33 1 40 81 31 90

E-mail: Marianne.courouble@developpement-durable.gouv.fr

GHANA (Host country)

Nana Kofi ADU-NSIAH
Executive Director
Wildlife Division
Forestry Commission
P.O. Box MB 239
Accra
Ghana

Tel.: + 233 244 107 143

E-mail: adunsiahn@yahoo.com

Ms Cornelia DANSO
Assistant Tourism & Commercial
Development Officer
Wildlifew Division
Forestry Commission
P.O. Box MB 239
Accra
Ghana

Tel.: +233 209 015877 / 277 85888

E-mail: ilacorne@yahoo.co.uk

Prof. Yaa NTIAMOA-BAIDU
Chair/Senior Scientist
Centre for African Wetlands (CAW)
University of Ghana
P.O. Box LG67
University of Ghana
Legon, Accra
Ghana

Tel.: +233 (0) 392 (0) 512835

Fax: +233 (0) 302 (0) 512836

SOUTH AFRICA

Ms Pamela KERSHAW
Biodiversity Control Officer
Conservation Management
Department of Environmental Affairs
Private Bag 447
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

Tel.: +27 12 310 3430

Fax: +27 12 320 7024

E-mail: pkershaw@environment.gov.za

Ms. Santhuri NAIDOO
Department of Environmental Affairs
Private Bag 447
Pretoria 0001
South Africa

E-mail: snaidoo@environment.gov.za

SWITZERLAND

Dr Olivier Biber
Biodiversity Policy Officer
FOEN (via Gruner AG)
Postfach 197
3000 Bern 7
Switzerland

Tel.: +441 31 311 17 40

E-mail: Olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch

OBSERVERS

FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS FOR HUNTING & CONSERVATION OF THE EU (FACE)

Mr Angus MIDDLETON
CEO
Rue F. Pelletier 82
1030 Brussels
Belgium

Tel.: +32 273 269 00
Fax: +32 273 270 72
E-mail: angus.middleton@face.eu

THE WILDFOWL & WETLANDS TRUST (WWT)

Dr Baz HUGHES
Head of Species Conservation Department
The Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT)
Slimbridge
Glos. GL2 7BT
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 (0) 1453 891 172
Fax: +44 (0) 7717 431 689
E-mail: baz.hughes@wwt.org.uk

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL

Ms Nicola CROCKFORD
International Species Policy Officer
Birdlife International
RSPB, The Lodge
Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2DL
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 1767 693 072
Fax: +44 1767 683 211
E-mail: Nicola.crockford@rspb.org.uk

OISEAUX MIGRATEURS DU PALEARCTIQUE OCCIDENTALE (OMPO)

Dr Patrick TRIPLET
Advisor for African Projects
OMPO
5, avenue des Chasseurs
75017 Paris
France
Tel.: +33 686 679 792

Fax: +33 322 315 600
E-mail: Patrick.triplet1@orange.fr

UNEP/CMS SECRETARIAT

Mr Borja HEREDIA
Technical Officer
UNEP/CMS Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49 228 815 2422
Fax: +49 228 815 2449
E-mail: bheredia@cms.int
www.cms.int

UNEP/AEWA SECRETARIAT

Mr Marco BARBIERI
Acting Executive Secretary
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49 228 815 2414
Fax: +49 228 815 2450
E-mail: mbarbieri@unep.de
www.unep-aewa.org

Mr Sergey DERELIEV
Technical Officer
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49 228 815 2415
Fax: +49 228 815 2450
E-mail: sdereliev@unep.de
www.unep-aewa.org

Mr Florian KEIL
Information Officer
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49 228 815 2451
Fax: +49 228 815 2450
E-mail: fkeil@unep.de
www.unep-aewa.org

Ms Marie-Therese KÄMPER
Administrative Assistant
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat
UN Campus
Hermann-Ehlers-Str. 10
53113 Bonn
Germany

Tel.: +49 228 815 2413
Fax: +49 228 815 2450
E-mail: mkaemper@unep.de
www.unep-aewa.org