



14th MEETING OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

10-13 April 2018, Bonn, Germany

REPORT OF THE SECRETARIAT

INTRODUCTION

This report covers the work of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for the period between February 2016 and February 2018.

The report is divided into five sections:

1. Staffing and Organisation of the Secretariat;
2. General Management, which includes recruitment of Parties and cooperation with other organisations;
3. Science, Implementation and Compliance;
4. Capacity Building; and
5. Communication, Information Management and Outreach.

Activities reported in detail in other TC14 documents are only mentioned briefly here, with a reference to the relevant substantive document containing more information.

The day-to-day work of the Agreement Secretariat, which includes responding to incoming mail, maintaining the Secretariat's extensive network of contacts, internal meetings with CMS, UNEP and/or UN Heads of Agencies etc. are not specifically mentioned in this report.

1. STAFFING AND ORGANISATION OF THE SECRETARIAT

Staffing Situation

Staff funded by the core budget

There have been no major changes to the team during the period covered by the report.

African Initiative Unit

The positions of the African Initiative Coordinator (P-2) and the Programme Assistant (G-5) were partly funded (50 %) through the AEWA core budget 2016-2018 since 01 January 2016. The Secretariat was able to maintain the P-2 position at 100 % and the G-5 position at 80 % in 2016 and 2017, and expects to be able to do so until the end of 2018, thanks to contributions from the Federal Office for the Environment in Switzerland and the European Commission.

For a full report on the Implementation of the African Initiative and the Plan of Action for Africa, please see document TC14.6.

Staff fully dependent on voluntary contributions

Associate Programme Officer (P-2) for Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination of implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan

The position of the Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support and the coordination of implementation of the Lesser White-fronted Goose International Single Species Action Plan has been secured until February 2020. The Secretariat is grateful to the Norwegian Environment Agency for its continuing support of this important position.

Associate Programme Officer (P-2) and Programme Management Assistant (G-5) for the AEWA European Goose Management Platform

Thanks to funding received from the Norwegian Environment Agency towards the implementation of the AEWA European Goose Management Platform (EGMP), the Secretariat has been able to recruit staff on two project posts: one full-time P-2 Associate Programme Officer in July 2017 and one full-time G-5 Programme Management Assistant in November 2017. The possibility to maintain these posts is dependent on the annual voluntary contributions by the range states to the EGMP.

Interns

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat participates in the CMS Family Internship Programme. In the framework of this programme, thirteen interns supported the work of the Secretariat in the period under consideration (March 2016 – February 2018), which is an average of six interns per year.

Staff reclassification

All the three AEWA G-4 posts were reclassified in 2016, in accordance with AEWA Resolution 6.18 and the three staff members were successfully upgraded to G5 level in 2017.

At the CMS COP11 (Quito, November 2014), CMS Parties requested UNEP and the UNEP/CMS Secretariat through Resolution 11.1 “*to undertake a review of the grading of the Secretariat’s posts, in line with the functions of the Secretariat, [...] to enable decisions on the grading of the posts to be taken by Parties at COP12*”. In response to this mandate, the UNEP/CMS Secretariat contracted a Consultant to assess the need for reclassification for all CMS posts.

By correspondence of 29 September 2016, the AEWA Standing Committee provided the Secretariat with the mandate to commission a similar reclassification assessment alongside the one undertaken by the CMS Secretariat. The report delivered by the independent Consultant will be used, as requested by the 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee, to provide the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP7) to AEWA with a valid independent assessment of all Secretariat posts. The Consultant reviewed all positions except the three AEWA G-4 posts which had already been reclassified (*cf. supra*), as well as the post of the Executive Secretary, which had already been classified by UNON at P-5 level in 2012, but maintained at P-4 level by MOP5 due to financial constraints.

The 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee requested the Secretariat to initiate the adjustment of those job titles and job descriptions of the P-staff positions with the Human Resources Unit at the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), that had been assessed at being at a lower level than the ones they are performing on. This is not an upgrade and those positions will retain their current grading, but their titles and job descriptions will, at least, correctly reflect the actual duties and responsibilities undertaken.

Organisation of the Secretariat

The individual staff members and units work closely as a team, interacting with each other on cross-cutting issues on a daily basis; they are divided into four major areas of work (as described in Annex 1 – Organisational Structure and Annex II - Staff Composition of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat).

Each staff member has an annual work plan, which is approved and/or revised annually as well as on a mid-term basis by his/her direct supervisor. All the work plans are examined by the Executive Secretary, in order to ensure synergies between the units and to avoid a duplication of efforts. The Secretariat nonetheless faces a number of challenges in the delivery of its mandate and is rather stretched. This is due to the ever-increasing range of services to be delivered: without the extension of the part-time positions through voluntary contributions, the availability of staff funded through voluntary contributions and the support of interns, the Secretariat would not have been in a position to deliver all services requested during the course of the period covered by the report.

As of 01 January 2018, the core budget covers 7.25 full-time equivalent positions (FTEs), while voluntary contributions have allowed the addition of 4.15 full-time equivalent positions as at 31 December 2017. The Secretariat currently comprises twelve staff members (see Annex II): seven Professional Staff members (P staff) and five General Staff members (G staff).

2. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

Recruitment of Parties

Since TC13, two new Contracting Parties have acceded to AEWA (Belarus on 1 April 2016 and Botswana on 1 November 2017), bringing the total number of Parties to 77.

In addition, significant progress has been made in the accession process of a number of African non-Party Range States. Contacts at high level were established during various meetings, amongst them the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2) in May 2016 and the CMS COP12 in Manila in October 2017 and the UNFCCC COP23 in Bonn in November 2017. Furthermore, a multi-stakeholder consultation workshop was organised to re-energise the process of Cameroon's accession to AEWA (7-8 December 2016 in Yaoundé, Cameroon), with the financial support of the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN).

Through the same voluntary contribution, the Agreement Text was translated into Portuguese for the benefit of the Portuguese-speaking Range States and particularly to promote the accession of four out of the five African Portuguese-speaking countries. The Secretariat has published the Portuguese translation of the Agreement Text on its website in May 2017 and has further increased its efforts to recruit these Portuguese-speaking countries in Africa (namely Angola, Cabo Verde, Mozambique and Sao Tomé-e-Príncipe).¹

The recruitment of Arabic-speaking countries was hampered by the lack of an accurate and updated Arabic translation of the Agreement Text. The Depositary kindly offered to translate the latest version of the

¹ The Portuguese translation is available here:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/aewa_agreement_text_2016_2018_Portuguese.pdf

Agreement Text at MOP6; the text was delivered in May 2017 and distributed by the Secretariat to all Arabic-speaking countries in the same month.²

Efforts to recruit additional Parties in Europe and Central Asia, including Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece, Serbia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and Russia, are also ongoing.

Meeting of the AEWA Standing Committee

The 12th Meeting of the Standing Committee was held in Paris, France on 31 January -01 February 2017, at the kind invitation of the Government of France. The StC12 meeting report is available at:

http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/document/aewa_stc12_meeting_report_en.pdf

Meeting of the AEWA Technical Committee

The 13th Meeting of the Technical Committee was held in Nahsolim, Israel, 14-17 March 2016, at the kind invitation of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, in collaboration with the Israel Ornithological Center of the Society for the Protection of Nature. Further information about the meeting and its report is available at:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/meeting/13th-meeting-aewa-technical-committee>

Cooperation with UN Environment and Other Organisations

UN Environment

CMS Family

On 29 February 2016, the three Executive Secretaries of the Secretariats of the CMS Family of Agreements (UNEP/CMS, UNEP/EUROBATS and UNEP/AEWA) met the Executive Director of UN Environment to discuss how to increase synergies within the CMS Family and within the other biodiversity-related MEAs. An Action Plan was adopted and approved in April 2016 by the Executive Director.

Based on the agreed outcomes in this Action Plan, a Strategic Meeting has been convened every three months amongst the three CMS Family Executive Secretaries to liaise on the accession of Parties, fundraising activities, up-coming meetings, programmatic synergies and common services. A monthly meeting on administrative issues is also held between the three Executive Secretaries and the head of the Administrative and funds Management Unit.

With regard to programmatic synergies, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat continues to collaborate closely with the CMS Secretariat and the CMS Raptors MOU in particular, both on issues related directly to bird conservation and sustainable use as well as to wider conservation issues such as bycatch. The main areas of collaboration are outlined in more detail below under the chapter on Science, Implementation and Compliance.

Ramsar Convention

The cooperation with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention has focused mainly on African topics. The coordinator of the African Initiative attended the African regional preparatory meeting for the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (February 2018) and was able to develop fruitful contacts with Ramsar national focal points and many other stakeholders.

² The new Arabic translation can be downloaded from the AEWA website at: http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/Agreement%20text%20and%20annexes%202016-2018_Arabic_March%202017_0.pdf

The coordinator of the African Initiative attended the 3rd Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting for the BirdLife/MAVA Foundation project on the conservation of migratory birds (CMB) along the coast of West Africa (Guinea, October 2017). This helped to further align CMB project activities to support AEWA implementation and promote further collaboration with AEWA and the Ramsar Convention.

The Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention worked with the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat to support the participation of three NGOs from Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal at the GlobWetland Project training session on the margins of the Ramsar African pre-COP meeting (February 2018 in Dakar). These three NGOs, which are partnering with BirdLife and MAVA on the conservation of migratory birds, are also undertaking wetland projects and supporting the Contracting Parties to implement the Ramsar Convention.

At the time of writing, the Secretariat was discussing a possible collaboration with the Ramsar Secretariat to organize an AEWA training-of-trainers workshop on flyway conservation for francophone West and Central Africa in early 2019, with funding secured by AEWA from the European Commission.”

And last but not least, the Ramsar Secretariat is also a partner of the RESSOURCE project (see below).

BirdLife International / Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)

In May 2016, the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat participated in bilateral meetings in the United Kingdom with BirdLife International and with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), where, amongst other things, the implementation of International Single Species Action Plans (ISSAPs) were reviewed and the WMBD partnership discussed.

The CMS Family and BirdLife International joined forces at the Second Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA2) held in Nairobi 23-27 May 2016 to raise awareness of guidelines devised to ensure that renewable energy installations are deployed in ways that have no adverse impact on migratory species such as birds and bats. CMS, AEWA, EUROBATS and BirdLife International organised a side event on “*Reconciling the Deployment of Energy Technologies with Migratory Species*” and the AEWA and CMS Executive Secretaries delivered speeches at the event. (For further information, please see: http://www.unep-aewa.org/sites/default/files/unea_energy_flyer_1.pdf)

Conservation Evidence

A new partnership has been launched with the information resource initiative, Conservation Evidence. Based at the University of Cambridge, UK, with collaborators and advisers in all continents of the world, Conservation Evidence is a free, authoritative information resource designed to support decisions on maintaining and restoring global biodiversity. The idea is to give conservationists access to the very latest and most relevant ecological knowledge to support their policy or management decisions. (For further information, please see: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-launches-new-partnership-conservation-evidence>)

International Council for Game and Wildlife Conservation (CIC)

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat attended the 63rd General Assembly of the CIC, 22-23 April 2016, in Brussels. The Executive Secretary chaired a special event on migratory birds and presented the sustainable harvest guidelines and the European Goose Management Platform project. The meeting was a good opportunity to share the results of the last MOP with the international hunting community. CIC is considering relaunching its Migratory Birds Commission. CIC is also a partner of the World Migratory Bird Day campaign. The Executive Secretary visited the CIC Headquarters in Hungary in December 2017.

FAO and FFEM and the RESSOURCE Project

An agreement between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the French Facility for Global Environment (FFEM) was signed on 06 October 2016, under which four principal wetland areas in five AEWA Contracting Parties of the Sahel (Senegal, Mali, Chad, Sudan and Egypt) will be targeted. This agreement will focus on the sustainable management of migratory waterbirds, which play a significant

role in guaranteeing food security for people living in the region. The FFEM is co-funding one third of the project's €5 million budget.

The project entitled RESSOURCE is the acronym for the French equivalent of "*Strengthening expertise in Sub-Saharan Africa on birds and their rational use for communities and their environment*". The ecosystems at the core of the project are based on the Senegal River Valley, the Inner Niger Delta, Lake Chad and parts of the River Nile. These are areas upon which almost one billion people depend for agriculture, rearing of livestock, fishing and hunting, and which are equally of critical importance to millions of waterbirds.

The project will attempt to evaluate the sustainability of exploiting the resources represented by waterbirds thanks to its integrated approach which aims to: (i) assess the resources in terms of the numbers, distribution and socio-economic importance, especially for rural communities (ii) to preserve its habitats and (iii) to propose conservation measures at community level. This project led by FAO and supported by FFEM involves not only the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat but also other key partners such as: ONCFS, CIRAD, OMPO, Wetlands International, BirdLife International and the Ramsar Convention, among others.

The Executive Secretary attended the first project Steering Committee meeting at the FAO Headquarters on 9-11 May 2017, where the programme of work was discussed between all the partners.

For further information, please see:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/conserving-waterbirds-africa%E2%80%99s-sahelo-saharan-region>

The initial activities and outcomes of the project can be assessed here:

<http://www.eip.gov.eg/Upload/Publications/project%20ressource-%20july%202017.pdf>

Other Flyways: Northern America

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat was invited to attend the XXI Meeting of the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management held in Ottawa, 16-19 May 2016. Bringing together stakeholders from Canada, the USA and Mexico, the meeting had a particular focus as it was "*celebrating 100 years of conservation of migratory birds and their habitats and looking ahead to the next 100 years*". In this context, during the plenary, the Executive Secretary of AEWA presented the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement as a model for conservation across the continents. He showed that despite national and regional efforts, the conservation success is hampered if the flyway approach is not used as the basis for actions.

As an intergovernmental treaty, AEWA is a tool for international cooperation for the African-Eurasian Flyway, which is the flyway encompassing the highest number of Range States – 119 – of any flyway system in the world.

On 26 October 2017, in the margins of the CMS COP12, a Partnership Agreement between Environment for the Americas (EFTA) and the CMS and the AEWA was signed. The purpose is to develop a unified global recognition and appreciation of migratory birds and the need for their conservation across the globe. The result of the cooperation is that the **International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD)** organized by EFTA for the Americas and the **World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD)** organized by AEWA and CMS have merged and after consultation, "**World Migratory Bird Day**" was chosen as the official name for the new globally unified campaign.

Other Flyways: East Asian-Australasian

The Ramsar Secretariat nominated Mr Sergey Dereliev, Head of Science, Implementation and Compliance at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat for a member of the Technical Committee of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP). His nomination was accepted and his membership status confirmed in March 2018. This

exchange with the partnership in the East Asian-Australasian flyway will allow for a closer cooperation and coordination between the two instruments.

Fundraising

From February 2016 to date, voluntary contributions received were earmarked for the:

- European Goose Management Platform;
- Velvet Scoter action planning workshop held in Vilnius, Lithuania on 4 - 6 October 2016;
- White-headed Duck action planning workshop held in Madrid, Spain on 24 - 26 October 2016;
- Dalmatian Pelican action planning workshop held in Lithotopos, Greece on 22 - 24 November 2016;
- Implementation of the Single Species Action Plans for the White-winged Flufftail and for the Grey Crowned-crane;
- IKI project on climate resilient site network across the African-Eurasian flyway; and
- Various documents for the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties, i.e. the 7th edition of the Conservation Status Report, Guidance on the Targeting of Monitoring Schemes, Conservation Guidelines on Waterbird Monitoring, Guide to Guidance on Reducing the Impact of Marine Fisheries on Migratory Seabird Populations Listed under AEWA, Assessment of the Threats Posed by Marine Litter to Migratory Seabird Populations Listed under AEWA and Priorities for Seabird Conservation under AEWA.

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat would like to express its appreciation for the financial support received towards the implementation of the Agreement. It should, at the same time, be noted that this level of support is still far below the amount estimated as necessary to implement the Agreement at a satisfactory level.

Fundraising has become increasingly difficult over recent years due to the continuing global financial crisis. The Secretariat is therefore spending more time on fundraising activities. It should be stressed that some of the mandatory reports for MOP7, such as the Site Network Review, have not been commissioned due to the lack of funding.

MOP6 and preparation of MOP7

The MOP6 proceedings were published on the AEWA website and as hard copies, which were distributed to all Parties at the end of December 2016. The Secretariat is grateful to the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety of Germany (BMUB) for printing them.

The Standing Committee members and the Secretariat is grateful to the Government of South Africa for having generously offered to host the 7th Session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP7). MOP7 will be held on 4 - 8 December 2018 in South Africa. The identification of the exact venue for the meeting is currently ongoing.

The national reporting cycle to MOP7 was launched in February 2018 and reports are due for submission by 07 June 2018.

3. SCIENCE, IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE

As 2016 was a year following a session of the MOP, it was a year with many follow-up tasks and new initiatives on the basis of the various Resolutions adopted at MOP6, including the AEWA TC workplan. These primarily

concerned the launch of the development of the next Strategic Plan for 2019-2027, a wide array of Species Action and Management Plan activities, including the establishment of the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP), an Implementation Review Process (IRP) on-the spot appraisal mission to Iceland, involvement in the project on climate resilience of the site network, contribution to the preparation of a proposal for an EU regulation on the phase out of lead shot for hunting in wetlands and participation in the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI) under CAFF.

Development of the Strategic Plan 2019-2027

Building on AEWA's first Strategic Plan, which initially covered the period 2009–2017 but was extended to 2018 by MOP6, the AEWA Strategic Plan 2019–2027 will provide the framework for implementation of the Agreement by the Contracting Parties, Standing Committee, Technical Committee, Secretariat and Partners. It covers three complete triennia (or intersessional periods) between Meetings of the Parties (MOPs), from MOP7 (in 2018, when the draft Strategic Plan 2019–2027 will be tabled for discussion and final adoption by Contracting Parties), to MOP10 due to be held in 2027.

MOP6 instructed the Standing Committee, working with the Technical Committee and Secretariat, to revise the existing Strategic Plan and to present a draft covering the period 2019–2027 for consideration at MOP7. The Standing Committee established a Strategic Plan Working Group (SPWG) in which the Technical Committee was represented by the Chair & Vice-Chair, the three thematic experts, the invited CEPA expert, and the NGO members (CIC, IUCN and Wetlands International).

A facilitated meeting of the SPWG was held in Bonn, 28–30 June 2016, which discussed the findings of an evaluation of the existing Strategic Plan and identified some of the key elements to be included in the new Strategic Plan, including provisional Objectives and content for many of the associated Targets and Actions.

A preliminary consultation draft was circulated to members of the SPWG on 26 September 2016. A revised draft has been transmitted to all Contracting Parties (in both English and French) in April 2017. Based on feedback from Parties, a final draft was produced in July 2017 (please see TC Inf. 14.4 and TC 14.32 and <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-strategic-plan-revision-process-starts-bonn-top-priorities-flyway-conservation>)

It should be noted that, in parallel, a new Plan of Action for Africa 2019-2027 has been prepared following the same process (please see documents TC14.6, 14.32 and Inf. 14.5 and <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/kick-workshop-aewa-plan-action-africa-2019-2027>).

AEWA International Species Action and Management Plans and AEWA International Species Working Groups

During this triennium, the Secretariat facilitated the production of five new International Species Action and Management Plans, which are expected to be adopted at MOP7: two new AEWA International Single Species Action Plans were developed for the Velvet Scoter and the Dalmatian Pelican, as well as a revised Action Plan for the White-headed Duck. All three Plans were developed under the framework of the [EU LIFE EuroSAP project](#), coordinated by BirdLife International. Two draft AEWA International Species Management Plans were developed for the Barnacle Goose and the Greylag Goose under the framework of the European Goose Management Platform. These drafts are presented in documents TC14.11-14.15.

An overview on the current status of the establishment and coordination of AEWA International Species Expert and Working Groups is provided in the TC document 'Summary of the Current State of Species Action and

Management Plan production and Coordination with Recommendations to MOP for Extension, Revision or Retirement of Plans' (document TC 14.16).

AEWA White-headed Duck International Working Group

The 1st Meeting of the [AEWA White-headed Duck International Working Group](#) took place on 24-26 October 2016 in Madrid, Spain. It was hosted by the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture, Food and the Environment and organised by SEO/BirdLife with funding provided by the EuroSAP Project (LIFE14PRE/UK/000002), the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea, as well as the MAVA Foundation. The meeting was facilitated by Rob Sheldon and the Secretariat. The main focus of the meeting was the revision of the AEWA International Single Species Action Plan for the White-headed Duck. For more information, please visit the [AEWA website](#).

AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group

The 2nd Meeting of the North-Western European Breeding Range States of the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group took place from 23 to 24 November 2016 in The Hague, the Netherlands hosted by the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs at their premises. Meeting participants included Working Group members from Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands as well as the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) from the United Kingdom and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The meeting was chaired by the AEWA Focal Point for the Netherlands, Wilmar Remmelts and was facilitated by the Secretariat. Main outcomes included the prioritisation of key conservation actions for the species to be implemented under the Working Group in the region in the context of a joint work plan. For more information, please visit the [AEWA website](#).

The 1st regional meeting of the AEWA Black-tailed Godwit International Working Group for the countries hosting the species during winter along the East Atlantic Flyway, took place in Dakar, Senegal on 13-14 November 2017. Hosted by the Dutch Ambassador to Senegal, H.E. Theo Peters, at the Ambassador's Residence, the meeting was chaired by Colonel Lamine Kane, Head of the Directorate of National Parks from the Ministry of Environment of Senegal.

The meeting was facilitated by the temporary Working Group Coordinator from Sovon, Marc van Roomen and the Secretariat. The main outcome of the meeting is the development of a workplan detailing the most urgent conservation priorities for the East Atlantic Flyway Range States for the next three years, outlining detailed priority activities for each country, as well as overall urgent research needs. The meeting was kindly funded by the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and organized by Sovon together with Wetlands International Africa. For more information, please visit the [AEWA website](#).

AEWA Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group

In September 2017 the 2nd meeting of the AEWA Northern Bald Ibis International Working Group took place. The Meeting was hosted by the Government of Morocco in Agadir and facilitated by the Coordinator of the Group, Chris Bowden from RSPB and the Secretariat. The major outcome of this meeting is the triennial implementation plan, which defined the actions to be undertaken on the delivery of the ISSAP.

For further information please see <http://www.unep-awa.org/en/meeting/2nd-meeting-awa-northern-bald-ibis-international-working-group>

AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group

The coordination of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group continues to be facilitated by the AEWA Associate Programme Officer for Single Species Action Plan Support based at the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The [3rd Meeting of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group](#) was kindly hosted by the Norwegian Environment Agency at their premises in Trondheim on the 12-14 April 2016. The meeting agenda included the development of a work plan outlining priority activities for

implementation during 2016-2019 and Working Group activities have subsequently focused on the implementation of the workplan throughout the flyway.

Activities included the implementation of actions to reduce the threat of illegal killing to Lesser White-fronted Geese in the Ob River Valley, Russia during autumn migration in 2016 and 2017, a project to assess the [motivations behind illegal killing of Lesser White-fronted Geese in Northern Kazakhstan](#) in autumn 2017, expeditions to [Iran, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan](#) during the winter of 2017-2018 to identify and monitor potential key wintering sites as well as raise awareness of the species and to enhance monitoring capacity.

Worth highlighting in particular, is the [large-scale monitoring expedition organized in northern Kazakhstan in autumn 2016](#), co-funded by the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust (WWT). It estimated the Western main population at 28,500 – 40,100 individuals, which is significantly larger than the previous estimate of 8,000 – 13,000 birds. Despite the high numbers recorded, it should be noted that this still probably only constitutes some 4,500-5,000 breeding pairs. The full expedition report including updated monitoring guidance for Lesser White-fronted Geese is available on the AEWA website.

June 2017 marked the end of the 6-year EU LIFE+ project “[Safeguarding the Lesser White-fronted Goose along its European Flyways](#)” (LIFE10 NAT/GR/000638) in which the AEWA Secretariat was a partner. The main focus of activities lay in tackling the threat of illegal killing by undertaking various measures. In addition, the project included various actions on habitat management as well as on strengthening the international network under the auspices of the AEWA Lesser White-fronted Goose International Working Group. National Action Plans for the species were adopted in Hungary and in Greece.

Funding for these activities as well as the AEWA Associate Programme Officer post has kindly been provided by the Norwegian Environment Agency, the Finnish Ministry of Environment, the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety and the EU Commission.

European Goose Management Platform

Following the mandate by MOP6 (see Resolution 6.4), the Secretariat convened a [negotiation meeting on 11-12 May 2016](#), which was hosted in Paris by the French Ministry of the Environment, Energy and the Sea. The attending Range States agreed on the establishment of the European Goose Management Platform under the modalities suggested by the Secretariat. As part of the EGMP, the Secretariat convened a European Goose Management International Working Group (EGM IWG), which is the decision-making body of this initiative and by nature is inter-governmental.

This Working Group is set to have annual meetings to decide on the annual management measures for the goose populations under its remit. The first meeting of the EGM IWG took place on 14-16 December 2016 and was hosted in Kristianstad by the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. This first meeting focused on the International Species Management Plan for the Svalbard Population of the Pink-footed Goose (*Anser brachyrhynchus*), which has been under implementation since 2012, and the newly approved (in 2015) International Single Species Action Plan for the Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser f. fabalis*).

The EGM IWG also agreed on its modus operandi and elected Norway as the chair country for the next biennial period. The second meeting of the working group (EGM IWG2) took place on 15-16 June 2017 in Copenhagen, hosted by the Danish Ministry of Environment and Food, Environmental Protection Agency. At this second Meeting of the AEWA EGM IWG, working group members decided on the conservation and management measures to be implemented for the Svalbard population of the Pink-footed Goose and the Taiga Bean Goose. They also agreed on the way forward for the EGMP Task Forces, the national reporting process and project

concepts such as a review of national hunting regulations and an EGMP communication strategy and work plan. For more information, please see:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/two-goose-management-meetings-took-place-denmark>.

The development of International Species Management Plans for the Barnacle Goose and the Greylag Goose was initiated in 2017. Full funding was secured to hold a stakeholder workshop for the development of the International Species Management Plan for the Barnacle Goose. This first workshop took place on 12-14 June 2017 back-to-back with the EGM IWG2.

In addition, funding was secured to hold another species management planning workshop on 4-6 October 2017, in Paris, France, focused on the Northwest/Southwest European population of the Greylag Goose (*Anser anser*). The workshop was kindly hosted by the French Ministry of Environment and the François Sommer Foundation. Following these two workshops, the Secretariat and the EGMP Data Centre organized an internal workshop that was held back-to-back with the first EGMP Modelling Consortium Meeting in January 2018. The purpose of this workshop was to compile the information provided by Range States at the two species management planning workshops that were held in 2017 and to prepare a generic Framework for Action for management plans. As of January 2018, thanks to the French Wildlife Agency (ONCFS), a PhD student has been funded to focus on population modelling of Greylag Geese.

The TC is now invited to review and comment on the International Species Management Plan for the Barnacle Goose (TC14.14) and on the International Species Management Plan for the Greylag Goose NW/SW European Population (TC14.15).

The Secretariat has presented the adaptive harvest management approach at the flyway scale, as well as the main objectives of the EGMP at the 33rd International Union of Game Biologists (IUGB) Congress in Montpellier, France, on 22-25 August 2017. The Secretariat also attended two debates at the European Parliament; one in Strasbourg in January 2017 together with Prof J. Madsen and one in Brussels in March 2017 and introduced the EGMP to the EU Member States at the meetings of the EU Expert Group on the Birds and Habitats Directives (NADEG) in May and November 2017 at the European Commission in Brussels.

Implementation Review Process

The main activity in 2016 related to the Implementation Review Process has been the on-the-spot appraisal mission to Iceland in conjunction with the Bern Convention Secretariat. The mission took place on 23-27 May 2016 and the report was finalised on 19 October 2016 (available as document [AEWA/StC12.10](#)).

In January 2017, the Government of Bulgaria informed the Standing Committee through the Secretariat that all legal measures at national level have been exhausted and that the windfarm project at Smin can be implemented. At its 12th Meeting, the Standing Committee decided to refer the case to the European Commission.

In September 2017 the Standing Committee opened an IRP inquiry with the Government of the United Kingdom over information about the hunting of the Greenland White-fronted Goose. An initial response was received recently from the United Kingdom and is now under consideration.

Climate resilient site network project

The project “*Climate resilient site network in the African-Eurasian flyway*” launched at MOP6 in November 2015 is funded by the International Climate Initiative of the German Government and coordinated by Wetlands International. The Secretariat is involved as a co-funder and contributor. The project is entitled, and its concept

developed on the basis of the AEWA climate change agenda and mandates from the MOP. It involves some site assessments, two pilot projects in Mali and Ethiopia, production of guidelines and training of practitioners in African Parties. The Secretariat is on the project's Steering Committee and in 2016 attended the first face-to-face meeting in Bondo, Kenya and the second meeting in April 2017 at Lake Langano in Ethiopia, as well as the other two remote meetings of the Committee. The project is being implemented according to schedule despite certain complications related to safety and security at the pilot site in Mali.

Lead shot phase out in the EU

In 2016, the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA) initiated a process of compiling a report and draft regulation commissioned by the European Commission, in order to implement the AEWA provisions of phase out of the use of lead shot for hunting in wetlands. This involved provision of evidence by various stakeholders to which the Secretariat responded, working together with the Technical Committee (TC). The Secretariat also attended expert meetings at ECHA together with the TC Vice-chair, to review the compilation of evidence and drafting the proposed text of the regulation. Subsequently, the Secretariat - supported by the TC Vice-chair and other invited experts – has, since September 2017, been attending meetings of the relevant ECHA bodies (Risk Assessment Committee and Social and Economic Assessment Committee) as an accredited observer organisation, providing expert advice on the further deliberations on the restriction proposal.

Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative

The Secretariat continued to contribute to the implementation of the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI), established under the Arctic Council's biodiversity-related working group CAFF (Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna). The Secretariat serves on the Steering Group for the African-Eurasian flyway and attended the AMBI Steering Group Meeting, as well as the 1st AMBI Implementation Workshop organised by the CAFF Secretariat and hosted by the Dutch government on the 4-7 April 2016 on Texel in the Netherlands. The main activities in the AMBI work plan for the African-Eurasian flyway, which are being coordinated and implemented by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, pertain to reducing the threat of illegal killing of Lesser White-fronted Geese, as well as to reducing the threat of afforestation to AEWA species in Iceland. The Secretariat also contributed to the midterm review of the AMBI 2015-2019 Workplan, which was concluded in April 2017.

CMS Multi-stakeholder Energy Task Force

The Secretariat is a member of the CMS Multi-stakeholder Task Force and took part at its second meeting in September 2017 in Bonn. For more information please see: <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/second-meeting-multi-stakeholder-energy-task-force>

The Secretariat was involved in the co-organization of side-events with the CMS Secretariat at UNEA2 (see below) and in the margins of the UNFCCC meeting on 17 May 2017 (for further information, please see: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/energy-task-force-side-event-today-reconciling-energy-developments-migratory-species>).

CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT)

The Secretariat is also involved in the CMS MIKT and attended the joint meeting of the CMS MIKT and the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds that took place in June 2017 in Malta. For further information please see:

<http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/joint-meeting-cms-intergovernmental-task-force-illegal-killing-taking-and-trade-migratory>

CMS Working Group on Preventing Poisoning in Migratory Birds

Another CMS initiative in which the Secretariat is closely involved is the Working Group on Preventing Poisoning in Migratory Birds. This has a strong relevance for AEWA, in particular with respect to the mandate on phasing out the lead shot for hunting in wetlands, which the CMS Resolution 11.15 extended globally and to all types of habitats. The Secretariat attended the second meeting of the Working Group in Toledo, Spain in February 2017. Amongst other things, the Working Group decided on the establishment of its Lead Task Force. For further information please see: <http://www.cms.int/en/meeting/2nd-meeting-cms-preventing-poisoning-working-group-ppwg2>

AEWA Technical Series Publications

The following publications have been produced in the framework of the [AEWA Technical Series](#):

Technical Series No. 55

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Northern Bald Ibis (*Geronticus eremita*) – Revision 1. Available for download [here](#).

Technical Series No. 56

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Taiga Bean Goose (*Anser fabalis fabalis*). Available for download [here](#).

Technical Series No. 57

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Long-tailed Duck (*Clangula hyemalis*) Available for download [here](#).

Technical Series No. 58

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata arquata N. a. orientalis and N. a. suschkini*). Available for download [here](#).

Technical Series No. 59

International Single Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Grey Crowned-crane (*Balearica regulorum*). Available for download [here](#).

Technical Series No. 60

International Multi-species Action Plan for the Conservation of Benguela Current Upwelling System Coastal Seabirds. Available for download [here](#).

4. CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity Building activities have focused on two main areas: the Adriatic Flyway in Europe and the African region.

Adriatic Flyway

In partnership with EuroNatur, a German-based NGO, which provided financial and logistical support, a training workshop was organised for the National Administrative and Technical Focal Points of the AEWA Parties from the Adriatic flyway (Albania, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and The Former Yugoslav Republic

of Macedonia). Representatives of the governments and the NGO sector from the remaining three non-Party Range States in the Adriatic Flyway – Bosnia & Herzegovina, Greece and Serbia – were also invited to the workshop. The event was held on 13-15 September 2016 in Samobor, Croatia, hosted by the Croatian Ministry of Environmental and Nature Protection and organised by the Croatian Society for Birds and Nature Protection, and aimed to enhance cooperation and implementation of AEWA for countries situated along the Adriatic Flyway. For further information on the regional workshop please see:

<http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/aewa-adriatic-flyway-workshop-samobor-croatia>

Africa

Seven African AEWA Contracting Parties along the high-priority West-Asian/East African Flyway were involved in a project aimed at supporting the International Waterbird Census (IWC). Over the period 2016 - 2017, waterbird counts were carried out at some 100 sites in Burundi, Chad, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. The Secretariat conducted this project in close collaboration with key partners of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Monitoring Partnership, including Wetlands International, the National Hunting and Wildlife Agency of France (ONCFS) and the Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology (SOVON). The project was made possible thanks to a generous financial contribution from the Government of Sweden, through the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency. (for more information, please see: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news/boost-waterbird-monitoring-seven-aewa-parties-africa>).

The AEWA Small Grant Fund has also contributed to Capacity Building activities through many projects initiated in Africa. Two projects funded under the 2013 cycle of the AEWA Small Grants Fund were finalized in 2017. In Guinea, the project, entitled “*Strengthening National Capacity for sustainable conservation of Migratory Waterbirds in Guinea*”, was implemented in the period 2014-2016. The project helped to develop a National Work Plan for the Implementation of the AEWA Plan of Action for Africa, as well as a National Multi-Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Lesser Flamingo and the Black-crowned Crane in Guinea. The project also improved national capacity for waterbird monitoring and raised awareness on the importance of waterbird conservation.

Gabon completed a project aiming to enhance technical and operational capacity for the survey and monitoring of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the country. This project, which started in January 2015 and lasted 16 months, was led by the Gabon Ministry of Water and Forests, through the Directorate General for Wildlife and Protected Areas.

In June 2017, four new projects from AEWA Contracting Parties in Africa were approved for funding under the latest cycle of the AEWA Small Grants Fund in June 2017. All of them have a Capacity Building component:

- Kenya: “*Building Capacity Preparedness for Rift Valley Lakes Conservation*” is implemented by Nature Kenya.
- Mauritania : “*Conservation of the Nesting Sites for Lesser Flamingos (Phoeniconaias minor) at the Aftout Essahili Islands (Chat Boul)*” is implemented by the NGO AMISO (Association mauritanienne des amis des oiseaux et de la protection des espèces animales menacées d’extinction)
- Nigeria: “*Building the Capacity of Stakeholders to Enhance Effective Monitoring of Migratory Waterbirds in some Coastal and Inland Wetland Areas of Nigeria*” is implemented by the Nigerian Conservation Foundation
- Zimbabwe: “*Species Surveys and Habitat Assessment for Conservation Planning to Secure the Future of two Crane Species in Zimbabwe*” is implemented by BirdLife Zimbabwe.

5. COMMUNICATION, INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND OUTREACH

Joint CMS/AEWA Communications Unit

Implementation Arrangements

Through Resolution 6.22, the Meeting of the Parties requested the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats to develop a proposal detailing the implementation arrangement for the joint CMS/AEWA Information Management, Communication and Awareness-raising (IMCA) Unit including staff time and budget sharing ratios, management structure, monitoring and evaluation indicators, among others, to be approved by the Standing Committee.

The proposal for implementation arrangements of the joint IMCA Unit, as requested by Resolution 6.22. was circulated on 27 September 2016 and approved by the members of the Standing Committee on 24 October 2016.

The day-to-day management of the shared Unit continues to be the responsibility of AEWA's Information Officer, who manages the team in close cooperation with both the CMS and AEWA Executive Secretaries since its establishment in January 2014.

As outlined in the implementation arrangements, the work of the Unit is guided by an agreed Programme of Work (PoW) and all IMCA team members are required to use a web-based Time and Task Monitoring Tool (Toggl) to record the actual work being conducted by the IMCA Unit for each respective Secretariat.

The first annual Programme of Work for the Unit was agreed by the two Executive Secretaries for 2017, which was a CMS COP year. The resulting time balance in 2017 is in favour of CMS as a result of the higher workload for the CMS COP12 in October 2017. In 2018, which is an AEWA MOP year, it is expected that the balance should be in favour of AEWA as estimated by the 2018 Programme of Work.

For more background on the composition and management arrangements of the shared Unit please see [AEWA/StC12.16](#).

Report on Activities (Summary)

Below is a summary of the main communication and information management related activities carried out by the IMCA Unit for AEWA between February 2016 and February 2018.

Information Management

The IMCA Unit technically manages and maintains all external websites and online tools of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. This includes the management of the official AEWA website, the AEWA Technical Committee Workspace and a number of AEWA Single Species Action Plan Working Group websites. In addition, the IMCA Unit is in charge of the technical management of the Online National Reporting System (ORS), the Online Meeting Registration System and Contacts Database, all of which are used by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The website analytics in place for the official AEWA website show 56,000 unique users and 230,000 pages viewed in the period from February 2016 to February 2018.

Online National Reporting – Improvements to the AEWA Reporting Format

Over the course of this reporting period, the IMCA Unit worked closely with the AEWA SICU unit and UNEP-WCMC to help set-up AEWA's MOP7 National Report in the Online Reporting System (ORS). Improvements were made to the online presentation of the report through a customized "species per country" option that was previously not available in the AEWA report. The reporting process and technical (IT) support service for

AEWA National Respondents on issues relating to the use of the Online Reporting System is also being managed by the IMCA Unit for reporting to AEWA MOP7.

Website News Production

Approximately 93 website news articles have been featured on the AEWA website since February 2016. The published stories report on current AEWA activities such as meetings, major events and publications and aim to keep the wider AEWA network informed of the activities of the Secretariat and other AEWA stakeholders. The articles are usually drafted by the responsible officers at the Secretariat and then edited and prepared for web publishing by the IMCA Unit. For a full overview of news articles published on the AEWA website since February 2016, please visit the following link: <http://www.unep-aewa.org/en/news>.

Thematic Pages for the AEWA Website

Work on a number of thematic pages began in late 2017 and has intensified in 2018. Under the guidance of the AEWA Executive Secretary, the IMCA Unit is preparing special web presentations around key topics such as 1.) Climate Change 2.) Lead Poisoning and 3.) Renewable Energy. The intention is to bring together all relevant information around these topics into a single, well-presented web page on the AEWA website. The goal is to create content that will act as both a useful introduction on the topics as they relate to AEWA and as a gateway and hub for all relevant and available information relating to the given topic (Resolutions, Publications, News, Events etc).

Social Media Highlights (2016 – 2018)

In addition to the official website and other online tools, the IMCA Unit manages the AEWA Twitter and Facebook social media channels. Over the course of the reporting period (February 2016 – 2018) the number of AEWA Facebook page fans grew from 810 in February 2016 to 1402 fans in February 2018, while the number of twitter followers grew to a total of 1027 followers. The channels are being used mainly to promote unique AEWA content published on the AEWA website and/or selected AEWA relevant content from major partners and active members of the wider AEWA community. It should be noted that the growth of the channels is entirely organic, meaning that no paid advertising is used on any of the AEWA accounts. The Unit is also in charge of curating the social media channels of CMS and World Migratory Bird Day.

Campaigns and Events

The IMCA Unit is charged with managing the public outreach and awareness-raising activities of the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. The primary outreach campaign for AEWA (and CMS) being led by the IMCA Unit continues to be World Migratory Bird Day. Below is a summary of the main developments relating to the campaign since February 2016.

World Migratory Bird Day 2016

2016 marked the 10th anniversary of the World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) campaign, which has grown into a flagship global awareness campaign jointly run by the UNEP/AEWA and UNEP/CMS Secretariats through the IMCA Unit. With the theme "... and when the skies fall silent? Stop the illegal killing, taking and trade!", World Migratory Bird Day 2016 highlighted the large numbers of migratory birds which are illegally killed or taken across the Mediterranean.

The 2016 campaign also indirectly supported the launch of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT), created under CMS Resolution 11.16. The organization of the global World Migratory Bird Day campaign in 2016, was made possible thanks to a voluntary contribution to AEWA from the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB). A total of 323 events in 85 different countries were registered on the WMBD website in 2016.

World Migratory Bird Day 2017

With the theme “Their Future is our Future”, World Migratory Bird Day 2017 was strategically aligned with the theme of CMS COP12 which took place in Manila, the Philippines in October 2017. Also in line with the global UN Sustainable Development Agenda, WMBD 2017 focussed on highlighting the links between sustainable development and the protection of the environment, in particular, the links between sustainable development and the conservation of migratory birds.

Funding available for the 2017 campaign was significantly less than for previous campaigns. To overcome the shortcomings in funding, the IMCA Unit worked with the United Nations Volunteer – Online Volunteering Programme to engage a designer for the official WMBD Poster and the Trailer. World Migratory Bird Day 2017 was made possible through these UN Volunteers as well as through the funding received from the Governments of Finland, Germany and the CMS Raptors MoU. A total of 229 events in 74 different countries were registered on the WMBD website in 2017. Since its inception, the campaign has triggered over 2500 events in 139 different countries, with an average of 210 registered events each year.

Transatlantic Cooperation Towards a Unified Campaign

In January 2017, upon the kind invitation of Environment for the Americas (EFTA), AEWA’s Information Officer/IMCA Coordinator was invited to participate in the annual Board Meeting of the International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) Initiative in Washington, D.C. The meeting helped pave the way to a process of greater consolidation and cooperation between the two “migratory bird day” initiatives, which had been developing independently and with limited alignment since 2006.

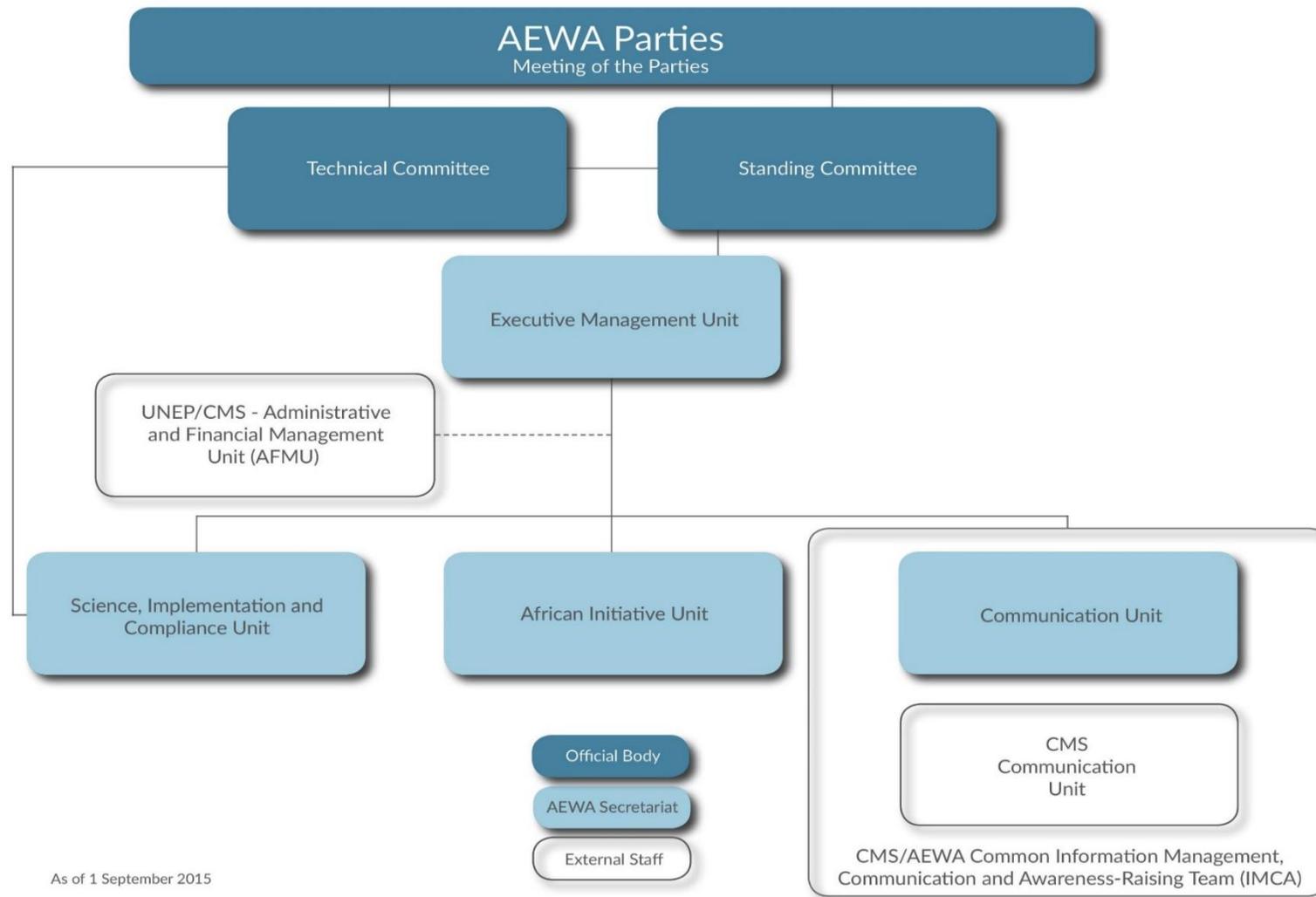
On 26 October 2017, in the margins of the CMS COP12 in Manila, AEWA, CMS and EFTA signed a Partnership Agreement, which formally unites two of the world’s largest bird education campaigns, International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD) and World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD), in a bid to strengthen global recognition and appreciation of migratory birds and highlight the urgent need for their conservation. In December 2018, another planning meeting between EFTA, CMS and AEWA took place in Bonn, where the decision was made that the new joint campaign will adopt the single name of “*World Migratory Bird Day*” and that major events to celebrate the day will be organized twice a year, on the Second Saturday in May and in October.

World Migratory Bird Day 2018

The theme of World Migratory Bird Day 2018 is “*Unifying Our Voices for Bird Conservation*”. 2018 is an important transition year in the history of World Migratory Bird Day. The IMCA Unit is working closely with EFTA to try to align and harmonize the global presentation of World Migratory Bird Day. Work is ongoing to try to establish greater ownership of the campaign amongst the main flyway actors along the African-Eurasian, the East Asian-Australasian and Americas Flyways.

A stronger emphasis is also being placed on fundraising, especially towards the 2019 campaign as significant resources will be needed to properly re-brand and develop a state-of-the-art website for the new global campaign. It should also be noted that all materials produced for the 2018 campaign are being developed without any additional voluntary funding.

ANNEX I – UNEP/AEWA Secretariat Organisational structure



ANNEX II – UNEP/AEWA Secretariat Staff Composition



UNEP/AEWA Secretariat: Staff Composition

Executive Management Unit

Jacques Trouvilliez, Executive Secretary
Catherine Lehmann, Executive Management Support Officer
Marie-Therese Kämper, Administrative Assistant

Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit

Sergey Dereliev, Head of Unit
Nina Mikander, Coordinator for Single Species Action Plans
Eva Meyers, Coordinator for the European Goose Management Platform (EGMP)
Christina Irvén, Programme Management Assistant (EGMP)
Jolanta Kremer, Programme Management Assistant

African Initiative Unit

Evelyn Moloko, Coordinator for the AEWA African Initiative
Birgit Drerup, Programme Management Assistant

Communication Unit

Florian Keil, Information Officer/
IMCA Team Coordinator
Dunia Sforzin, Information Assistant

As of 8 March 2018