



*AGREEMENT ON THE CONSERVATION OF
AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS*

Doc. AEWA/MOP 7. Inf.2

Agenda item: 25

Original: English

05 September 2018

7th SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

4 - 8 December 2018, Durban, South Africa

“Beyond 2020: Shaping flyway conservation for the future”

UNEP/AEWA SECRETARIAT: REVIEW OF JOB CLASSIFICATION

*(Compiled by Douglas Win, Independent Consultant,
commissioned by the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in 2016)*

UNEP / AEWASecretariat:
Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian
Migratory Waterbirds

REVIEW OF JOB CLASSIFICATION

Final Report
13 November 2016

List of Acronyms

AEWA	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
AFMU	Administrative and Fund Management Unit
ASCOBANS	Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans in the Baltic, North East Atlantic, Irish and North Seas
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of Parties
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning (suite of business software)
GJP	Generic Job Profile (developed by the UN)
EUROBATS	Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats
GS	General Service level
HR	Human Resources
ICSC	International Civil Service Commission
JD	Job description
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOP	Meeting of Parties (AEWA governing body)
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
TOR	Terms of Reference
Umoja	Recently introduced ERP software for administrative / financial operations
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNON	United Nations Office at Nairobi

Table of Contents

I. INTRODUCTION1

II. BACKGROUND1

III. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF JOB CLASSIFICATION.....2

IV. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY2

V. APPROACH TO CLASSIFICATION ISSUES.....3

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION.....5

Annexes:

1. AEWA Organizational Chart
2. Job description template
3. Classification Results Table
4. Results and Rationales
5. General Service grade level descriptions

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents the findings and recommendations from a review of grade levels for six posts at the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) in Bonn, Germany. The Secretariat is provided by UNEP at the request of the Parties. The review was conducted by an independent external consultant with experience in organizational analysis and job classification using the UN common classification standards. Recommendations are presented to senior management, and may serve as the basis for future re-classification proposals to the Meeting of Parties (MOP). Final authority for classification of AEWA posts lies with UNEP Headquarters in Nairobi.
2. The consultant was also engaged outside of this review to evaluate 26 posts at the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) also Bonn-based and the lead organization of the broader CMS family. The same processes and methodology were used for both organizations.
3. To help dispel some of the myths surrounding job classification in the UN, and to mitigate misunderstanding and misuse, this report provides some basic definitions and explanations of job classification purposes, principles and processes within the UN system.

II. BACKGROUND

4. AEWA is one of several Multi-lateral Environment Agreements (MEAs) operating under the administrative and financial rules of the United Nations Environment Programme in Nairobi. Also based in Bonn are CMS, ASCOBANS, EUROBATS and the Gorilla Agreement. AEWA is a binding agreement among Parties and therefore has its own governing body, the Meeting of Parties (MOP), which decides the programme of work and gives mandate to the Secretariat. Its Executive Secretary reports to the Executive Secretary of CMS for internal administrative matters and communications with UNEP. ASCOBANS, EUROBATS and the Gorilla Agreement operate within the CMS structure and reporting relationships. All five MEAs share administrative and financial services provided by UNON/UNEP through a common unit.
5. AEWA has 76 contracting parties, 41 from Eurasia including the EU, and 35 from Africa, with 119 “range states,” those nations that exercise jurisdiction over any part of a migratory route of a particular species. The number of staff servicing the Agreement has grown from two in 2004 to 10 in 2016 plus one temporary part-time post till the end of 2016. Two additional vacant posts are being currently filled and in 2017 it is expected that the Secretariat will have 12 staff members.
6. The MOP recently approved three G-4 posts for reclassification to G-5 and those have already been reviewed, approved and re-classified by UNON/UNEP. A recruitment process for the reclassified G-5 posts is currently underway. The post of Executive Secretary was reclassified to P-5 by UNON/UNEP in 2012, but MOP5 rejected that level for financial reasons. The job description was then revised and classified at P-4, the current level. With a classification consultant already engaged to review CMS classification, AEWA determined to have a similar review for their remaining posts using the same consultant. (One of these posts, the Associate Information Officer, is fully paid by AEWA but included in the CMS classification review because of its lead role over the Joint Information, Communication and Outreach Unit.)

III. PURPOSE AND PRINCIPLES OF JOB CLASSIFICATION

7. Job classification is the system by which the UN determines the appropriate pay grade for each staff member. It is designed to objectively and accurately define and evaluate the duties, responsibilities and authorities of a post without regard to the knowledge, skills, experience, and education of the incumbent. This method of establishing internal pay differentials is called "**rank-in-job**". The UN adopted rank-in-job instead of "**rank-in-person**" mainly because it is less open to subjectivity, discrimination, politics and favouritism, and better able to adjust to changing organizational demands.

8. Each post is rated against criteria defined by the ICSC, with a set number of points assigned to each rating. The total number of points determines the classified level of the post. For example, for General Service posts, the UN classification standard includes the following factors:

- Nature of the work: focus, scope, and knowledge, skills and expertise required;
- Organizational environment: organizational context and managerial guidelines received;
- Teamwork and relationships: engagement, contacts, language skills; and
- Results: impact of actions, team roles.

9. Classification factors for Professional posts vary somewhat and include the following:

- Nature of Work: focus, scope, deliverables, context
- Enabling Environment: organizational context, managerial focus, exposure/risk
- Partnership: engagement, communities of interest
- Results: impact of actions, leadership roles

10. In principle, the basis for job classification system is ***the post and not the person***, but the process is sometimes misused to further individual needs rather than those of the organization. It is important therefore to reinforce and clarify for staff and management some of the realities of job classification. The most common misperceptions are that classification upgrades may be granted based on time in the job and/or good performance. The reality is that no matter how because classification is justified only if the duties and responsibilities themselves have changed significantly. Similarly, a substantial increase in the volume of work may be a management and staffing issue, but is not a justification for re-classification. Other factors NOT considered in job classification include:

- Individual traits, attributes and educational background;
- Duties assigned on a temporary or acting basis;
- Introduction of new tools and automated systems; and
- Market factors (supply and demand for certain job categories).

IV. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

11. The review covered four Professional posts and one General Service post. A fifth Professional post, the Team Leader of the Joint Information, Communications and Outreach Unit, is fully funded by AEWA but was reviewed as part of the CMS Classification Review. The findings for that post were reported in the CMS report but also included here to show results for all AEWA posts. Temporary posts, interns, consultants and project-funded posts were not evaluated with the exception on one P-2 Associate Programme Management post for which classification guidance is provided. Three GS posts had already been reclassified earlier this

year by UNON/UNEP to G5 and were therefore not included in this review. The post of Executive Secretary was also excluded from this review because it was determined to take the grade level before the AEWA governing bodies for consideration. Within the CMS Family, CMS was covered by a separate contract, while ASCOBANS and EUROBATS were not reviewed.

12. Prior to the onsite work, the consultant provided a standard template, shown in *Annex 2*, and asked that job descriptions be updated and approved by respective supervisors. Also in advance, AEWA provided a variety of background documents, including current and past organigrams, staffing tables, individual work plans, current job descriptions and previous job descriptions if applicable.

13. In Bonn, the consultant received an initial briefing from the Executive Secretary. In order to get clarification of the relevant job description and fill in blanks, the consultant met individually with each staff member in the office during the onsite visit.

14. Based on the job descriptions, interviews, and the context of each job within the structure, General Service posts were classified using the New Master Standard for General Service Posts promulgated by the ICSC in 2009. This is an automated system that assigns points to individual factor ratings and then calculates a total score and consequent grade level. Classifiers also use various benchmark job descriptions provided by the UN which are helpful when a post straddles the line between one level and another.

15. Professional posts were classified using the Master Standard for Professional Posts developed by the ICSC in 2004. The pre-classified UN Generic Job Profiles were also good references for this review.

16. Classification results were recorded in an Excel database for this report, found in *Annex 3*. Brief, individual rationales are found at *Annex 4*. The ICSC rating forms for each post are provided separately to AEWA management and eventually to UNEP / UNON.

17. For posts recommended for re-classification, the consultant made note of any job title changes needed to be consistent with UN practices. These are the official job titles used for administrative purposes.

V. APPROACH TO CLASSIFICATION ISSUES

18. Organizational context: Classifiers must review each job in its full organizational context. Functions are considered in relation to those of the jobs above and below in the hierarchy and elsewhere in the work unit. The classifier has to understand the source of any higher-level work delegated by the supervisor. Failure to consider jobs in their full context can lead to inaccurate classification.

19. Budget limitations: Classifiers advise on proper grade levels for the work being performed regardless of the financial impact of any re-classification proposals. If the organization's budget will not support proposed upgrades, then management may have to consider other alternatives.

20. Conservative approach and resistance by governing bodies: The AEWA member states are understandably conservative about approving new staff or higher grade levels for existing staff. Austerity movements at home and the reality that UN salaries can be higher than those within a Party's own civil service no doubt contribute to this financial conservatism. Nevertheless, job classification compares the duties and responsibilities of jobs within the UN system globally. Classifiers do not try to factor in market issues or governing body budgetary concerns. It is internal equity being sought, not external competitiveness or fairness. So for this exercise recommendations may in some cases go against the prevailing sensibilities of the Parties.

21. Comparison with other UN agencies: UN staff members understandably want to compare their own jobs with those they know or hear about in other UN organizations and, on that basis, may conclude that their job is under-graded. Such comparisons are often faulty and unhelpful because a) the jobs may be the same in title but not in actual content, b) it is not certain that the comparator job has been accurately classified and, c) the other organizations may be different in size, scope of work and complexity of functions. Only a proper classification against the common UN standard can provide accurate comparisons across organizational lines.
22. Consistency with CMS Family: The consultant was asked to help ensure a reasonable parity in grade levels within the CMS family. The UN common system itself should ensure parity, but the consultant was particularly mindful of relativity within the CMS family.
23. Introduction of Umoja: In 2015, the UN introduced “Umoja” a new Enterprise Planning Resource (ERP) across its agencies and affiliate organizations. As with any new business software, especially one on this magnitude, it has taken time for staff members to learn and implement the system effectively and to realize its benefits in terms of productivity, accuracy and potential time savings. Some jobs are more affected than others, but the introduction of new software or other tools seldom has an impact on grade levels.
24. Local labour market: Duty stations like Bonn offer a wealth of university-educated job applicants for whom the P-2 level (or even G-5/6 for that matter) provides an attractive salary, even if they might be over-qualified for the work itself. This is a complex financial, recruitment and HR issue, but has no bearing on job classification.
25. Impact of growth: Growth in the number of staff, the budget or, in the case of CMS, the number of agreements/MOUs signed do not by themselves have an impact on grade levels. It is always the nature of the work itself that controls grade level.
26. Use of UN Generic Job Profiles (GJPs): GJPs developed by the UN are useful as a basis for vacancy announcements and as a benchmark for job classification, especially for new posts. But for some jobs, the distinctions between levels may not be as clear as they should be, leading incumbents to incorrectly see their jobs at the next highest level. For this review, incumbents were discouraged from using content from GJPs.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

27. Table 1 below shows the results of the classification against the relevant UN Master Standard. A brief discussion of the findings is provided below. Individual rationales are included in *Annex 4*.

Table 1: Findings of Classification Exercise

Title	Unit	Current Incumbent	Current grade	Proposed grade	Remarks
Assoc. Programme Officer	Executive Office	Lehmann	P-2	P-3	upgrade
Administrative Assistant	Executive Office	Kämper	G-5	G-5	confirm
Programme Management Officer	Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit	Dereliev	P-3	P-4	upgrade
Assoc. Programme Officer*	Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit	Mikander	P-2	P-3	upgrade
Assoc. Programme Officer	African Initiative	Moloko	P-2	P-3	upgrade
Associate Information Officer**	Joint Communications Unit	Keil	P-2	P-3	upgrade
*Advisory only. Project funded post not formally classified in UN system.					
** Post funded by AEWA but included in CMS review and shown here for informational purposes.					

28. Several factors were considered in classifying AEWA jobs. First, AEWA — as with CMS — functions within the broader organizational structure of UNEP, specifically under the Environmental Law and Governance Division, and therefore has to be put in that perspective for classification purposes. Where one of the classification factors (e.g. Organizational Context, Engagement, and Impact of Actions) refers to the “organization,” that is usually taken to mean UNEP as a whole.

29. On the other hand, AEWA has its own Meeting of Parties and for programme implementation, fundraising, conference services, promotion of partnerships and promotion of accession of new Contracting parties, AEWA functions with a degree of independence even within the CMS family and the administrative and financial rules of UNEP.

30. The size of an organization in terms of number of staff does have some impact on classification ratings, especially for the factor “Leadership Roles.” But more important than the size of staff is the extent to which the entity manages “diverse professions.” The UN Master Standard describes “Individual units or divisions within the organization which perform different, distinct or separate roles and types of work or pursue different objectives.”¹ From this consultant’s perspective, this definition has limited application to either AEWA or CMS, with the possible exception of the Administrative and Financial Management Unit (AFMU), which

¹ *Classification Guidelines*, International Civil Service Commission, March 2009.

has some oversight and compliance responsibilities and an additional reporting line to UNEP Corporate Services.

31. An issue that is common to both AEWA and CMS is the budgetary pressures that have resulted in recruiting most Programme Officers at the P-2 level. As noted earlier in this report, the Parties, faced with austerity movements at home, are understandably conservative about new staff and grade levels. It was found in this review however that several Programme Officers were recruited at P-2 but over time have taken on mainly P-3 responsibilities.

32. P-2 is in effect the entry level for professional staff in the UN system. At the P-2 level, a Programme Officer would not be expected to lead missions or have substantive external contacts with important stakeholders or government officials. S/he would not represent AEWA at meetings of the Parties or intervene on behalf of AEWA in matters of any controversy. A P-2 would have only limited independence in setting meeting objectives and agendas, hiring consultants, initiating programme changes, or in directly promoting efforts to strengthening collaboration. All of this is more closely aligned to the P-3 level for Programme Officer.

33. This is not to say that there should be no P-2 level Programme Officers at AEWA, but rather that management and, for that matter, governing bodies should have a clear understanding of the expectations for P-2 versus P-3 and try to avoid recruiting at a level that is inconsistent with the duties and responsibilities that are anticipated and the UN classification system.

UNEP/AEWA Secretariat: Staff Composition



As of 12 November 2016

P= Professional category

G = General Services

Annex 2

UNEP / AEWA Job Description Template

In preparing this job description, please do not:

- 1) *Use wording from UN or UNEP generic job descriptions;*
- 2) *Overcomplicate the job description;*
- 3) *Describe detailed processes. (Only describe main functions.)*

Job Title: Click here to enter text.
Organizational Unit: Click here to enter text.
Post Number: Click here to enter text.
Grade Level of the Post: Click here to enter text.
Incumbent: Click here to enter text.
Immediate Supervisor: Click here to enter text.
General purpose and context of the job (maximum 2-3 sentences): Click here to enter text.
Supervisory or lead responsibility if any: Click here to enter text.
Primary duties (10-15 maximum). <i>Please use descriptive action verbs to describe duties; avoid “assist” and “coordinate.”</i> Click here to enter text.
Regular contacts, internal and external: Click here to enter text.
Authorities and independent decision making: <i>Click here to enter text.</i>
Significant changes in duties since last classification/ since recruitment: Click here to enter text.

Signatures :

I have reviewed the above job description for my post and agree that it accurately reflects my current duties and responsibilities:

Name/Title of Incumbent

Signature

Date:

Click here to enter text.

Certification of correctness of job description:

Name/Title of Immediate Supervisor

Signature

Date:

Click here to enter text.

Incumbent comments:

Click here to enter text.

Supervisor comments:

Click here to enter text.

AEWA Classification Review (2016)
Recommendations and Rationales

Executive Management Unit

1. Associate Programme Officer: (*Recommended upgrade to P-3*) Post reports to the Executive Secretary and has a wide range of programme and administrative responsibilities related to the internal management of AEWA. Also has considerable involvement in fundraising, helping to identify fundraising priorities and drafting proposals. (The fundraising work at CMS was found to be P-3 level.) Contributes to the preparation of AEWA documents and functions as Documents Control Officer. Functions as Conference Management Officer for MOP with over 250 participants. This role involves team coordination for approximately 30-34 staff members from the CMS Family. This sort of leadership would typically not be assigned to a P-2. Both because of the role in the Executive Office and because of the Conference Management functions, the level and nature of external contacts are higher than typically associated with P-2. Some of the functions of this post straddle the line between P-2 and P-3, but the range and scope of the functions justify a P-3 level and are consistent with UN Generic Job Profile for P-3 Programme Management Officer and should be re-titles as such as per UN practices.
2. Administrative Assistant: (*Confirm at G-5*): Reports to the Executive Secretary. Functions are generally consistent with UN generic job profile for G-5 with duties that go beyond secretarial to include administrative and programme work plus with some IT assistance to staff. However, no HR work is included in the JD as that is handled by the P-2 Associate Programme Office also reporting to the ES. The presence of the P-2 in the same Office of the ES is somewhat limiting for this post in a relatively small organization. Post delivers specialised support to the ES requiring evaluation but limited requirement for adaptation and interpretation. The scope and depth of the work are moderate requiring considerable experience, and training or self-study. Work generally does not require negotiation or resolution of controversial matters as would be expected at G-6.

Science, Implementation and Compliance Unit

3. Programme Management Officer / Team Leader: (*Recommend upgrade to P-4.*) When initially classified by UNON, the post was titled Technical Office and the main responsibilities focused on servicing the Technical Committee and its various working groups and providing scientific input into the AEWA Action Plan. The post had supervisory responsibility for one GS post. Since then the duties have expanded to include broader responsibility for implementation of the overall objectives of AEWA. The post now has supervisory responsibility for two professional and two GS posts. The unit has increased responsibilities related to supporting the servicing the Standing Committee and the MOP. The post represents AEWA in external meetings with the Parties, non-Party range states, NGOs and other relevant stakeholders.
4. Associate Programme Management Officer (*Advise P-3 level.*) This post is funded 100% through voluntary contributions and is therefore a “project post” not usually subject to formal job classification. However, it is common for UN organizations to request informal guidance on project posts. The post serves as the International Species Coordinator for the Lesser White-fronted Goose and as programme officer for certain species action plans. The funding Parties originally offered funding at P-3, but AEWA opted for a longer period of funding at the P-2 level. Of course the issue here is not funding, budgets or labour markets, but the nature of the work actually being performed. The post has independent decision-making with regard to the Lesser White-fronted Goose, including control over budget and programme decisions, and a range of external contacts with government representatives and AEWA stakeholders. Similar to several P-2 posts at CMS recommended for P-3 by this consultant, this post has both P-2 and P-3 responsibilities, but operates with sufficient independence and has representational responsibilities to justify classification at the P-3 level. Should be re-titled to Programme Management Officer as per UN practices.

African Initiative

5. Associate Programme Management Officer (*Recommend upgrade to P-3.*) The post was recruited at P-2 for budgetary reasons, but the current work conforms to P-3. The post represents UNEP/ AEWA at meetings of the Agreement and serves as Chair of a Partner's Project Steering Committee. The post has a high degree of operational leadership for the African Initiative. The P-2 level would be much more in the background assisting a more senior Programme Officer, but in this case the incumbent is expected to take initiative on devising new ways to improve the implementation of AEWA in Africa. The post reports directly to the Executive Secretary and is initiating rather than assisting on programme matters and liaison with African Parties. Both political awareness and political sensitivity are required. Beyond that, the post has supervisory responsibility for a G-5 Administrative Assistant, rarely found at P-2. The duties of this post classify below the midpoint of the range but still at the P-3. The post should be re-titled to Programme Management Officer as per UN practices.

Joint Information, Communication and Outreach Unit

(This post was included in the CMS Classification but included here for informational purposes since this is a joint CMS / AEWA effort and the post is fully funded by AEWA.)

1. Information Officer / Coordinator (*Recommended upgrade to P-3.*) The unit was created in 2014 as a pilot project to merge the public information function of CMS and AEWA. An existing P-2 Information Officer was placed in charge of the unit, overseeing the work of G-7, G-5 and a G-4 Information Assistants plus two consultants and several interns. The work includes the full range of Public Information tasks, such as press and media relations, website management, publications design and content, and editing. Based on the UN GJP for Public Information Officers, the P-2 level would be a contributor but would not supervise staff and consultants and would not be making assignments. An assumption is made here that this arrangement will be made permanent. If not, it may be necessary to re-evaluate grade levels.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

UN General Service Levels

The descriptions below are generic and provide a general understanding of UN grade levels for General Service work. They are not used in the formal job classification process which, instead, is based on a detailed analysis of specific, well-documented job factors.

GS-4 This is the working level for administrative and technical support functions. Work involves a variety of tasks that require the selection, interpretation and assembly of information and data for the execution of recurring patterns of work, based on knowledge of standard practice and requiring a choice of methods to use. Requires thorough knowledge of the related work in own office and general knowledge of similar work in other offices. Fully competent incumbents are expected to resolve most questions and problems, referring only the most complex to higher levels. At full competency, works under moderate supervision and selects from a variety of established procedures to accomplish work. Some assignments involve adjustments of equipment, instruments, tools, and devices to perform numerous operations.

GS-5 Involves tasks of substantial variety and complexity and requires the selection, interpretation and assembly of information and data from several sources in examining problems for which several possible solutions exist but which are normally covered by general practice. Requires thorough knowledge of the procedures and basic knowledge of the specialised practices of the office and knowledge of related work in other offices. May serve as a resource to others in a particular area and/or in the resolution of more complex problems and issues requiring advanced administrative and technical skills. Works under general supervision. Provides guidance to more junior staff.

GS-6 This is highly skilled, semi-professional work in administrative, technical and programme functions. In administrative and support work, incumbents typically have supervisory responsibility or serve in a lead capacity over a work group or an end product. Requires the application of different and unrelated processes and methods and an understanding of a broad area of operation within a specialised field, including related work of other offices. Jobs typically require extensive practical experience. Administrative jobs require advanced theoretical knowledge in their field (accounting, personnel, public relations, etc.) and related support activities (journal entries, reconciliation, entitlements, copy editing, etc.). Adapts procedures, techniques, materials and/or equipment to meet special needs. Technical jobs are at the expert level operating and maintaining complex specialised computer equipment.

GS-7 Semi-professional work involving responsibility for a group of specialised tasks in support of an area of work of the Organisation, requiring a thorough knowledge of the assigned area of work as well as general knowledge of related fields and the application of advanced and specialised methods and procedures. Typically a supervisory level although work may be non-supervisory if it is providing work at the corporate level, that is, not a duplicative assignment; or if it is highly technical, such as research assistance. Technical jobs are at the expert level operating and maintaining the most complex specialised equipment or providing guidance and advice to staff on the most complex office applications.