

AEWA MOP 5 HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 14 MAY 2012

The fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP 5) of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds convened for its first day in La Rochelle, France, on Monday, 14 May 2012, under the theme of “Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands.” Delegates heard opening statements, witnessed the AEWA Awards Presentation Ceremony, and addressed organizational matters.

During the afternoon, delegates considered progress on implementing the AEWA Strategic Plan, issues related to national reporting and international reviews.

OPENING OF THE MEETING

Sabrina Laconi, Deputy Mayor of La Rochelle, representing Mayor Maxime Bono, welcomed participants and described the importance of species conservation and nature reserves to the city.

Béatrice Abollivier, Prefect of the Charente-Maritime department, outlined efforts to facilitate the sharing of the coast and its wetlands by birds and people, lauding collaborations among hunting and nature protection organizations.

In a video message, Achim Steiner, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), highlighted the upcoming Rio+20 meeting, pointing to the links between waterbird conservation and sustainable development in the context of the green economy.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), commended AEWA as a “small but effective conservation agreement.” She highlighted successful ongoing activities, notably the African Initiative, which she said boosts the implementation of the Agreement in the African region, and also attracts new African parties to AEWA. She stressed the need to strengthen AEWA’s knowledge base by further developing the International Waterbird Census and ensuring its stable, long-term funding. She announced that the position of AEWA Executive Secretary will shortly be advertised.

Marco Barbieri, Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA, welcomed Ethiopia, Chad, Montenegro and Zimbabwe as the newest parties to the Agreement, noting that they bring AEWA’s membership to 66. He said despite all past efforts and successes under AEWA, many waterbird species are still in decline and knowledge gaps still exist. Barbieri highlighted the need for a suitable coordination mechanism to ensure the success of the African Initiative, and also for adequate funding levels, stating that “AEWA is worth the investment.”

Calling La Rochelle an “iconic venue” for migratory waterbird conservation, Jean-Pierre Thébault, Ambassador for the Environment, France, stressed the threatened status of many migratory waterbirds, and reiterated his country’s support of AEWA. He highlighted, *inter alia*, the importance of AEWA’s Plan of Action for Africa and the value of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in waterbird conservation.

Nick Williams, Programme Officer, Interim Coordinating Unit for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) of CMS, welcomed France to the MoU, and Ambassador Thébault, calling the agreement a symbol of his country’s commitment to the conservation of birds, signed the document.

Barbieri introduced the signing of a new MoU between the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and CMS. Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General, Ramsar, noted the new agreement would “update, renew and refocus” their already-existing collaboration, and Bert Lenten, CMS Deputy Executive Secretary, committed to ongoing cooperation, noting the importance of wetlands for not only waterbirds but also other migratory species addressed by CMS.

AEWA WATERBIRD CONSERVATION AWARDS

The 2012 AEWA Waterbird Conservation Awards, which recognize individuals and institutions for contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of waterbirds, were introduced by Sergey Dereliev, AEWA Secretariat, and presented by Øystein Størkersen, AEWA Standing Committee Chair. The award in the Individual Category was given to the late Brooks Childress, for his work on flamingo conservation. Following a moment of silence, Sandra Childress accepted the award on her husband’s behalf, noting his deep appreciation for waterbirds, their habitats, and for people who shared his passion and vision.

The International Wader Study Group was awarded in the Institutional Category. Accepting the award on behalf of the Group, Gregor Scheiffarth pointed to the efforts of the Group’s volunteers, noting that researchers are often subject to the limitations of political boundaries that are crossed by waders and that international collaboration to develop sound knowledge of wader ecology is essential.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

Bart Ebbinge, Chair of the Goose Specialist Group, coordinated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission and Wetlands International, delivered a keynote address on managing increasing goose populations. He said many goose populations have increased since hunting regulations were introduced in the 1970s, and noted that hunting has now resumed in many countries to reduce pressure on agricultural land. Ebbinge presented case studies relating to brent, white-fronted and pink-footed geese, describing the fine balance between hunting pressure and population size. Stressing the importance of good hunting bag statistics and data on population sizes and dynamics, he concluded that: hunting can have a major impact on goose populations; some species, including the taiga bean goose, are still declining; more flexible hunting legislation would be useful to respond to changing population densities, and that harvest rates should be coordinated and monitored internationally.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Introducing organizational matters, Størkersen, said that the meeting would address bureaucratic issues, including the budget, but noted that the central focus of AEWA is “conservation on the ground.” He also highlighted some of the challenges for the meeting, including discussions on climate change, extractive industries, the Central Asian Flyway and funding the International Waterbird Census.

Barbieri then introduced the Rules of Procedure (AEWA/MOP5.2), outlining two proposed amendments to address inconsistencies between the Rules and the Agreement, and delegates adopted the Rules of Procedure as amended.

Delegates elected Paul Delduc (France) as Chair of MOP 5, and James Gichia Njogu (Kenya) as Vice-Chair, and adopted the proposed agenda and work programme (AEWA/MOP5.3/Rev.1). Ukraine, the UK, Togo and Kenya were elected to the Credentials Committee.

Delegates established two working groups, electing Norway as Chair and Algeria, assisted by Uganda, as Vice-Chair of the Finance and Administrative Working Group, and Kenya as Chair and South Africa as Vice-Chair of the Scientific and Technical Working Group.

Delegates then admitted several observers.

OPENING STATEMENTS

ICELAND, CÔTE D’IVOIRE, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and POLAND announced that they were in the final stages of accession to AEWA.

CHAD, GABON, ETHIOPIA and ZIMBABWE recalled their recent accession to the Agreement. CHAD described its national habitat and species diversity, and ETHIOPIA highlighted relevant activities including biodiversity monitoring, public awareness campaigns and the development of single species action plans. ZIMBABWE outlined its national priorities, including mainstreaming AEWA activities into national development plans.

MAURITANIA, TOGO and the AFRICAN GROUP stressed the importance of waterbird conservation in the larger context of ensuring sustainable livelihoods, with the AFRICAN GROUP highlighting its work on a five-year Plan of Action including activities towards waterbird conservation at the regional level.

OUTCOMES OF CMS COP 10 AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS OF RELEVANCE TO AEWA

Lauding the growing overlap between CMS and AEWA focal points as an example of increasing synergies, CMS Executive Secretary Mrema presented on the outcomes of CMS COP 10 that are of relevance to AEWA. Pointing to COP 10’s theme of ecological networks, she highlighted the links between species and habitat protection and AEWA’s work on the Critical Sites Network Tool.

She noted a CMS resolution on flyways, along with efforts to organize meetings of Central Asian Flyway range states and synergies with meetings of the Raptors MoU, and a resolution on the development of an action plan for the conservation of migratory landbirds.

Mrema also noted AEWA-relevant CMS work on, *inter alia*: protection of migratory birds from collision and electrocution by power grids; minimizing risks of poisoning to migratory birds; a review of invasive alien species; the impacts of climate change on migratory species; developing a new “CMS family” website to improve data sharing and harmonize reporting; and the future shape of CMS and its instruments, including AEWA.

Germany, on behalf of the European Community (EC), said the EC would present a proposal to mandate the Standing Committee to enhance synergies between CMS and AEWA.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AEWA STRATEGIC PLAN

The Secretariat introduced the report analyzing the overall progress of the implementation of the 2009-2017 Strategic Plan (AEWA/MOP5.11), noting that the report concluded overall progress was “very insufficient.” He said the most progress had been achieved in the systematic sustainable use of waterbirds, and that the least progress had been achieved in improving the conservation status of migratory waterbirds.

The Secretariat explained the report included 12 recommendations to improve implementation of the Strategic Plan. SENEGAL noted that several of the recommendations have been taken up by the Plan of Action for Africa 2012-2017.

NATIONAL REPORTS AND ONLINE REPORTING PROCESS

Discussing the report on national reports and the online reporting process (AEWA/MOP5.12), the Secretariat outlined recommendations to improve reporting, including to: address the wording of questions to avoid misinterpretation; tailor questions to each contracting party; develop an analytical module for the reporting system; and train national respondents in use the system.

In the ensuing discussion, MALI explained it had not submitted its national report due to national political unrest. The RAMSAR SECRETARIAT said several of its parties had expressed an interest in an online platform that allows for harmonization and cross-searching between various multilateral environment agreement (MEA) databases.

The Secretariat outlined the development of the online reporting system (ORS), noting the 69% response rate, and introduced the draft resolution on national reporting and the online reporting system (AEWA/MOP5 DR 1).

SWITZERLAND, DENMARK, SENEGAL and TUNISIA reported technical difficulties with submitting their reports online. SENEGAL questioned the need for harmonization with reporting on the EU Birds Directive, and TUNISIA lamented the Secretariat’s “top-down approach.” The Secretariat recalled that the system and format had been approved by MOP 4, and that the Standing and Technical Committees had been closely involved in the intersessional work on the ORS. He said the Secretariat would circulate a survey on the ORS, and delegates agreed to establish a working group to consider the issue further.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEWS

Szabolcs Nagy, Wetlands International, outlined the 5th edition of the Conservation Status Report (AEWA/MOP5.14) and the preliminary Site Network Report (AEWA/MOP5.15). Nagy presented recommendations from both reports, including, for the former, developing concerted efforts to improve monitoring and reducing impacts of biological resource use and water management activities, and for the latter, designating critical sites and conducting gap-filling surveys in poorly-known areas.

The Secretariat introduced the associated draft resolution on addressing gaps in knowledge of and conservation action for waterbird populations and sites important for them (AEWA/MOP5 DR 2), and announced that the draft resolution would be considered by the Scientific and Technical Working Group. Several delegations commented on the importance of the resolution, and some offered initial comments on, *inter alia*, site designation criteria, whether Ramsar criteria could be used by AEWA and collaboration between AEWA and Ramsar.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Participants arriving in the picturesque 1000-year-old port city of La Rochelle were greeted by warm sunshine and a harbor-side view, which many hoped would inspire MOP 5’s work. Monday, the opening day of the meeting, saw four countries announce they had recently acceded to the Agreement, and another four note they were in the final stages of doing so. Some pointed to the recently-established African Initiative as a key part of the success in attracting African parties and strengthening the Agreement in this region.

Others were more critical in their early-week assessments of AEWA, citing the damning review of the implementation of AEWA’s 2009-2017 Strategic Plan, in which progress was deemed as “very insufficient.” Yet, while cautious in their praise, some seasoned delegates reasoned that AEWA is only one third of its way through the Strategic Plan period and should therefore not be judged too harshly at this point. Looking forward, and foreshadowing the still-to-come budgetary negotiations, they stressed that funding will be critical if AEWA is to meet the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan.

AEWA MOP 5 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 15 MAY 2012

AEWA MOP 5 convened for its second day in La Rochelle, France, on Tuesday, 15 May 2012.

Delegates considered the Implementation Review Process (IRP), the report on International Implementation Tasks (IITS), the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) Project, and reports from the Standing Committee (SC) and Technical Committee (TC), Depository and Secretariat.

During the afternoon, delegates discussed finance and administrative matters, proposals for amendments to the Agreement, institutional arrangements, and then convened in working groups.

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW PROCESS

Sergey Dereliev, AEWA Secretariat, presented the SC's IRP report (AEWA/MOP5.16). He reviewed the IRP's aims and procedures, and provided details on the three cases it has addressed to date on: illegal hunting of the critically endangered sociable lapwing in the Syrian Republic; drainage of the Salina of Ulcinj for tourism development in Montenegro; and a wind farming project adjacent to Lake Durankulak posing risk to the globally threatened red-breasted goose in Bulgaria. MONTENEGRO and BULGARIA provided updates on their efforts in these cases, and delegates agreed to add to the proceedings a note asking the SC and TC to continue studying the present and future cases.

REPORT ON AEWA INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASKS 2009-2016

The Secretariat addressed progress made towards the AEWA IITs (AEWA/MOP5.17 Corr. 1) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 3 Corr. 1). He said that the Secretariat had accrued EUR1.4 million in voluntary contributions and currently 13 of the 31 tasks have been partly or fully implemented, but that approximately EUR12 million are required to complete all tasks. He noted that the draft resolution contains a list of the tasks as revised by the TC.

Stressing the continuing funding gap, NORWAY suggested clear prioritization of the tasks, and SWITZERLAND called for increased efforts to contact parties directly to secure funding for particular tasks.

REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE WOW PROJECT AND POST-WOW PROSPECTS

Gerard Boere, Chair, WOW Project Steering Committee, outlined the implementation of the WOW project and follow-up plans (AEWA/MOP Inf 5.9), noting an independent evaluation concluded the project had achieved almost all its original aims. He explained the primary critique was the substantial amount of time required by the AEWA Secretariat to identify co-finance sources. Boere underscored that key outputs of the WOW project are being used by other initiatives.

The Secretariat then introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 4) urging parties to make use of the outputs and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to continue funding flyway

projects. The EU proposed including reference to the African Initiative, and delegates agreed to discuss this in the Scientific and Technical Working Group.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

Florian Keil introduced this item (AEWA/MOP 5.18) and presented the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 5). He highlighted the need for a coordinated revision process to adjust the Strategy to current needs.

NORWAY suggested prioritizing the Secretariat's activities, citing the African Initiative and work on the Critical Site Network as main priorities. SENEGAL called for geographic priorities in AEWA's communication.

WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

Keil presented the report on this annual event (AEWA/MOP5.19). He lauded the growing participation in these celebrations. Noting capacity constraints, and the work associated with the Secretariat-driven event, he asked parties to consider the future of the World Migratory Bird Day and possible future steps.

Many delegations voiced support for the concept. SENEGAL, LIBYA and MALI suggested reconsidering the date of the event, noting that many migratory birds have left Africa by May, and TUNISIA recommended the theme should not be changed annually, but always celebrate migratory birds.

PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGREEMENT

Dereliev introduced this agenda item (AEWA/MOP5.20 and 5.20 Addendum Rev.1) and the draft resolutions (AEWA/MOP5 DR6 and DR7).

David Stroud, UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee, elaborated on the interpretation of the term "extreme fluctuation in population size or trend" used in the context of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan (Status of the populations of migratory waterbirds) (AEWA/MOP5.21) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR7), which proposes to replace "extreme" with "large." He clarified that "extreme fluctuation" as defined by the IUCN, rarely occurs in the case of waterbirds.

Szabolcs Nagy, Wetlands International, addressed the interpretation of the term "long-term significant decline" (AEWA/MOP5.22 and AEWA/MOP5 DR7), highlighting three problems with the current definition, most notably its inability to trigger management actions in the case of rapidly declining populations. He presented the TC proposal to extend the definition of "long-term decline" to include cases in which a "decline can be predicted based on at least 10 years of the most recent data."

The EU suggested that all definitions used within the AEWA context be combined in a single document.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Marco Barbieri introduced the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the SC (AEWA/MOP5 DR 17), and outlined its provisions on appointment of members, funding and requirements for the SC to meet at least twice between MOP 5 and 6. He explained that all current members had only served

one term and are eligible to serve a second, and noted only one vacancy in the SC, for Europe and Central Asia. The EU announced the region would forward a candidate for this position following consultations.

Dereliev presented the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the TC (AEWA/MOP5 DR 18), pointing to amendments and adjustments to the *modus operandi* and its annexes proposed in the operative text. He presented the list of names for regional representatives and alternates proposed for the TC. UGANDA, supported by MALI, agreed to submit a proposed amendment to the *modus operandi* of the TC on the matter of parties having access to summaries of the qualifications of nominees, to inform their decisions. Delegates agreed to the proposed list of TC nominees and to continue discussions in the Finance and Administrative Working Group.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

REPORT ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: Barbieri introduced the report on finance (AEWA/MOP5.40 Rev.1), and Bert Lenten, CMS, explained the recruitment process for the AEWA Executive Secretary post. Lenten outlined that the responsibilities of the post have increased since 2003 and are now consistent with a P5 posting, as opposed to P4. The EU suggested, and delegates agreed, to continue discussions in the Finance and Administrative Working Group.

BUDGET PROPOSAL: Barbieri then introduced the budget proposal (AEWA/MOP5.41 Rev.1), noting six scenarios were provided for.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT OF WATERBIRD MONITORING: Dereliev introduced the documents on the strategic development of waterbird monitoring in the African-Eurasian flyways (AEWA/MOP5.42 Rev.1 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 22), recalling previous commitments under the Agreement to long-term monitoring.

Nagy stressed the need to: improve efficiency of data management and reporting; underpin global coordination by a global data management system; and identify long-term funding sources.

Dereliev outlined scenarios for financing, noting options included allocating funds for the IWC in the AEWA core budget, or establishing a new waterbird monitoring trust fund.

FUTURE PERIODICITY OF MOP SESSIONS: Barbieri introduced the proposal, emanating from MOP 4, to amend the periodicity of the MOP cycle from three to four years (AEWA/MOP5.43 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 23).

REPORTS

STANDING COMMITTEE: SC Chair Øystein Størkersen briefly presented the SC's report (AEWA/MOP5.6).

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: TC Chair Jelena Kralj presented the TC's report (AEWA/MOP5.7), highlighting the TC's new strategy of conducting most of its work in ten separate working groups. She said two outstanding tasks of the TC, relating to re-writing the Guidelines for Sustainable Harvest of Migratory Waterbirds and the identification of important sites vulnerable to climate change, had been included in the list of IITs for the next triennium.

DEPOSITARY: The NETHERLANDS provided the status report from the Depositary (AEWA/MOP5.8). He noted there are currently 65 parties, and that with Zimbabwe's accession on 1 June this would increase to 66.

SECRETARIAT: Marco Barbieri, Acting Executive Secretary, AEWA, presented the report of the Secretariat 2009-2012 (AEWA/MOP5.9). Barbieri reported on, *inter alia*: recruitment of new parties to the Agreement; strategic cooperation with other organizations; coordination and implementation of single species action plans (SSAPs); and policy-related developments.

Florian Keil presented the AEWA Information and Communication Technology (ICT) overview (AEWA/MOP5.10), noting the internet provides a way to "reach out across the flyway." He outlined the goal of extending virtual workspaces used by the TC and SSAP working groups to other working groups of the Agreement. Keil asked parties to consider how to build the Secretariat's ICT capacity in a sustainable way.

SENEGAL encouraged the Secretariat to provide translation in French as well as English for its online Africa portal.

OTHER MATTERS

RAPTORS MOU: Nick Williams, Interim Coordinating Unit for the CMS MoU on the Conservation of Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) announced Slovakia as the 40th signatory of the MoU, and welcomed Rastislav Rybanič, Slovakia, to sign on behalf of his country. Rybanič said species like the red-footed falcon will benefit from this international conservation cooperation.

WORKING GROUPS

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE: The Working Group, chaired by Øystein Størkersen (Norway), convened on Tuesday afternoon to consider draft resolutions on the budget (AEWA/MOP5 DR 21), a structural funding regime for the IWC (AEWA/MOP5 DR 22) and the periodicity of AEWA meetings (AEWA/MOP5 DR 23), along with their associated documents. Størkersen recalled the Group's aim of finding consensus, and led participants through initial general comments on the six budget scenarios, retaining or upgrading the current Executive Secretary P4 post, three or four year meeting cycles, and the potential transfer of temporary staff positions to core Secretariat positions. They also discussed the current level of the Trust Fund, to determine the flexibility of the budget. Divergent initial views were expressed on all issues, and delegates requested additional information from the Secretariat on the budgetary implications of upgrading the Executive Secretary post.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL: The Working Group, chaired by Malta Qwathekana (South Africa), met Tuesday afternoon. Participants heard a presentation by Hein Prinsson, Bureau Waardenburg, on the conflict between migratory birds and power grids (AEWA/MOP5.38). On the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 11), SENEGAL suggested removing reference to Special Protection Areas under the EU Birds Directive, and agreed to consult with the EU bilaterally. Delegates then agreed the resolution.

On national reporting and the online reporting system (AEWA/MOP5 DR 1), SENEGAL expressed concern over harmonization with reporting under the EU Birds Directive, and agreed to consult bilaterally with the EU. Delegates then agreed the draft resolution, with minor amendments.

Delegates also agreed the draft resolution on implementation and revision of the communication strategy (AEWA/MOP5 DR 5), noting that AEWA national focal points may also be national focal points for communication, education and public awareness.

On conservation guidelines, TC Chair Jelena Kralj presented revised guidelines on: regulating trade in migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5.33); avoidance of introduction of non-native waterbird species (AEWA/MOP5.34); and identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5.35). Baz Hughes, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, presented the guidelines on the translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes (AEWA/MOP5.36). The EU suggested several amendments to the resolution adopting the guidelines (AEWA/MOP5 DR 10), and the Working Group agreed to revisit the issue on Wednesday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Participants plowed steadily through MOP 5's heavy agenda on Tuesday. As two working groups began their work late Tuesday however, the sheer scale of the work ahead became clear. The Scientific and Technical Working Group was mandated with addressing 12 resolutions in under two hours. While it confronted the task head on, by early evening the impossibility of the task was clear, with the Group managing to agree just three resolutions. While the Finance and Administrative Working Group had a shorter list of tasks, negotiations were equally challenging. Interventions and corridor conversations revealed divides between the "small handful" of major donors and some others on the question of upgrading the post of the Executive Secretary. As one donor made clear, in a period of financial austerity contributions cannot be increased and available funds should go "to projects, not personnel."

AEWA MOP 5 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 16 MAY 2012

AEWA MOP 5 convened for its third day in La Rochelle, France, on Wednesday, 16 May 2012.

Delegates discussed Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs) and Species Management Plans (SMPs), the implementation of the African Initiative, the adoption of the new Arabic translation of the Agreement, and institutional arrangements.

During the afternoon, delegates convened in working groups on finance and administrative matters, and scientific and technical matters.

INTERNATIONAL SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLANS AND SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

Sergey Dereliev, presented the document on SSAPs and SMPs (AEWA/MOP5.24) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 8). Recalling that 21 SSAPs had been previously approved, he noted that four new plans and one revised plan, plus one species management plan, are tabled at MOP 5, while a SSAP for the shoebill is under preparation. He described challenges, including funding and international coordination on SSAP implementation, and introduced the seven recently initiated intergovernmental working groups for SSAP coordination.

Pete Robertson, UK Central Science Laboratory, presented on the control of the ruddy duck in the UK. He recalled that this North American species was introduced in the UK in the 1940s and hybridizes with the native white-headed duck, a globally threatened species, throughout Europe. Describing how funding through an EU LIFE Project has boosted eradication efforts since 2005, he said that less than 1% of the population is now remaining in the UK, but that significant populations persist in mainland Europe.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN INITIATIVE

Evelyn Moloko, Coordinator for the African Initiative, AEWA, presented on the Plan of Action (PoA) for the implementation of the African Initiative, outlining the report on the implementation of the African Initiative since MOP 4 (AEWA/MOP5.31) and the proposed draft PoA for Africa 2012-2017 (AEWA/MOP5.32).

Moloko described the Initiative's origins at MOP 4, core budget funding for some of its activities such as PoA development and support for additional activities, including the hiring of a coordinator, through voluntary contributions. After describing its initial expectations and approach, she outlined seven sets of outputs following its key activity areas, including: recruitment of personnel; a draft PoA for Africa; implementation of the AEWA Small Grants Fund in Africa, with five African projects funded in 2010; and initiation and promotion of synergies.

Benin, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, called the Initiative "a compass" that guided work towards the PoA. SOUTH AFRICA urged parties beyond Africa to also "take ownership of this initiative," noting the global benefits of migratory bird protection, and encouraged parties to think innovatively about regionally-appropriate capacity building and communication approaches. Joining with TOGO and others in thanking donors for their support, MALI pointed to the importance of political will in these activities. TUNISIA encouraged further synergies among organizations and MEAs working in the field.

Describing the development of the draft PoA for Africa (2012-2017) (AEWA/MOP5.32), Moloko said 54% of African parties had provided feedback. Tim Dodman, Consultant for the PoA development, explained the PoA was discussed and agreed at the Pre-MOP 5 workshop. He said key revisions to the PoA included: major revision of "sustainable use" actions, with new targets and strategic revisions; a greater emphasis on livelihoods and tourism; and increased budget. Moloko then outlined resolution AEWA/MOP5 DR9, highlighting the proposal to establish a "light coordination unit" within the AEWA Secretariat, accompanied by strengthened presence in the sub-regions.

In the ensuing discussion, the EU praised the "impressive action plan," but questioned the coordination approach. He announced that France would establish a France-based technical coordinator position that will technically assist the African-based subregional coordinators, and provide a link to the AEWA Secretariat.

Delegates agreed to consult informally on integrating France's funding offer into the draft resolution.

ADOPTION OF THE NEW ARABIC TRANSLATION OF THE AGREEMENT TEXT

Noting that problems with the Agreement's Arabic translation had been identified, Barbieri introduced the new Arabic Agreement text (AEWA/MOP5.23), prepared under the Strengthening waterbird and wetland conservation capacities in North Africa (WETCAP) project.

Libya, on behalf of ARAB COUNTRIES, expressed appreciation for the translation, but noted some corrections and reviews of the annexes were still required. The MOP agreed parties would submit proposed modifications to the SC by the end of 2012, and tasked the SC with validating the translation.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES AND PROCESSES: Encouragement of further joint

implementation of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention:

Recognizing the shared goals of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention, the EU introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/

MOP5 DR 19). SENEGAL suggested reference to the Memorandum of Cooperation recently signed by the Ramsar Convention and CMS and also proposed adding specific reference to the Ramsar Convention in all draft resolutions that mention MEAs. The RAMSAR SECRETARIAT proposed additional language to the text, including on other joint activities of relevance such as the Global Interflyway Network and the UNEP INFORMEA process. MOP will consider the revised resolution on Friday.

Promote twinning schemes between the natural sites listed by AWEA and the network of sites under the Ramsar Convention: The EU introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 20). Welcoming the initiative, NORWAY suggested that operative text on identifying twinning opportunities with different regions in a shared flyway should be broadened to include other parties. The RAMSAR SECRETARIAT suggested referring to Ramsar activities equivalent to those mentioned by AWEA. SENEGAL raised concerns about classification and nomenclature of protected areas, and agreed to consult with the EU on revised text.

WORKING GROUPS

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE: The Working Group, chaired by Øystein Størkersen (Norway), resumed on Wednesday afternoon to take up the “many unresolved” budget and associated matters. The closed session was punctuated by several breaks for informal consultations.

Participants expressed their openness to considering all budget scenarios, and some stressed the need for any decision on the budget to allocate more funds to the Small Grants Fund (SGF) for projects in Africa. The Working Group also agreed to the EU proposal to retain the Executive Secretary position at a P4 level, and some who initially supported a four-year MOP cycle expressed willingness to consider a three-year cycle on the condition of concessions on budget increases. For a P4 post, Størkersen outlined the options of advertising openly for a fixed position or recruiting internally for a new Acting head, noting the latter would imply that if the subsequent budget negotiation raised the position to a P5 level, the internal incumbent would be eligible for the spot.

Participants discussed the options in the draft core budget scenarios of a part-time African Initiative Associate Programme Officer as the African Initiative Coordinator at the Secretariat and a part-time African Initiative Programme Assistant. Options discussed included removing the part-time assistant, in light of the voluntary contribution offered by France for a full-time African Initiative position and creating a full-time Programme Officer post either by augmenting the 50% core funding through voluntary funds or by merging the two proposed part-time positions.

The Working Group established a “select” small drafting group, along with the Chair and Secretariat support, to work with the budget spreadsheet and reach agreement.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL: The Working Group, chaired by Malta Qwathakana (South Africa), met Wednesday afternoon.

Delegates approved the draft resolution on revision and adoption of conservation guidelines (AEWA/MOP5 DR 10).

On the draft resolution on power lines (AEWA/MOP5 DR 11), in response to concerns voiced by the AFRICAN GROUP, delegates agreed to move reference to the EU Birds Directive to a footnote. The draft resolution was then agreed.

Delegates approved the draft resolution on national reporting and the online reporting system, agreeing to add the wording “where applicable” to reference to harmonization with reporting for the EU Birds Directive. They also approved the draft

resolution on the adoption of amendments and new guidance for interpretation of terms used in the context of Table 1 of the AWEA Action Plan (AEWA/MOP5 DR 7)

In addressing the draft resolution on amendments to the AWEA Action Plan (AEWA/MOP5 DR 6), delegates discussed reference to: certain exemptions from prohibited hunting methods; species listed as Near Threatened on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species; and the use of lead fishing weights. Delegates agreed to revisit this issue after consultations with the TC.

Following some suggested minor amendments to the draft resolutions on international reviews (AEWA/MOP5 DR 2) and on agrochemicals (AEWA/MOP5 DR 12), delegates agreed to revisit these matters Friday.

David Stroud, UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee, introduced the resolution on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5 DR 13), which encourages parties to complete the identification and designation of national protected area networks. The resolution was approved with minor amendments from the EU and BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL.

Stroud also introduced the draft resolution on waterbirds, wetlands and the impact of extractive industries (AEWA/MOP5 DR 14 Rev.1), noting commodity prices are driving a mining boom that is impacting wetlands. Delegates approved the resolution with minor amendments from the EU and the RAMSAR SECRETARIAT.

Stroud then introduced the resolution on alien aquatic weeds on waterbird habitats in Africa (AEWA/MOP5 DR 15), which was adopted with minor amendments from the EU.

Delegates approved the draft resolution on renewable energy and migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5 DR 16) with minor amendments.

Dereliev presented the new SSAP of the slaty egret (AEWA/MOP5.25), which delegates briefly discussed. Delegates agreed to revisit the remaining SSAPs at the next meeting of the Working Group.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As MOP 5 delegates considered the Plan of Action for Africa on Wednesday, several were surprised by the EU’s offer, on behalf of France, to host an African Initiative technical coordinator in France. Some argued that if the “technical” side of the role was emphasized, this could lead to increased technical cooperation and support to subregional coordinators, and importantly for many African countries, in the French language. Others were skeptical, saying that emphasis on the “coordinator” side of the role was a foregone conclusion. Further, noting this proposal involved a new coordinator located neither in Africa nor at the AWEA Secretariat in Bonn, some worried about creating an additional layer of bureaucracy.

In an afternoon working group on the budget, participants considered not only overall funding levels, but scrutinized, line-by-line, its provisions. While many approved finding savings within the existing budget, which could then be reallocated to implementation efforts – such as the Small Grants Fund for projects in Africa – one developing country, worried about some of the cuts to Secretariat support, cautioned that if underfunded, the cost of the resulting poor work by the Secretariat would be “paid by the birds.”

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: Since field trips were held all day on Thursday, this is the last daily report from MOP 5. The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of MOP 5 will be available on Monday, 21 May 2012, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/cms/aewa-mop5/>. A French translation of this document will be available shortly after that date.

SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE AFRICAN-EURASIAN WATERBIRD AGREEMENT: 14-18 MAY 2012

The fifth Meeting of the Parties (MOP) to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) met from 14-18 May 2012, in La Rochelle, France. The meeting brought together over 200 participants, representing contracting parties, non-party range states, national and international non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations and academia.

Delegates discussed, among other things: the implementation of the Agreement and Action Plan; international reviews; the International Implementation Tasks 2009-2016; the African-Eurasian Flyways Global Environment Facility Project; implementation and revision of the communication strategy; proposals for amendments to the Agreement's Action Plan; and international Single Species Action Plans and Species Action Plans. They also discussed the Plan of Action for the Implementation of AEWA in Africa (2012-2017).

The meeting, which adopted 27 resolutions, was conducted in plenary and in two working groups, one on scientific and technical matters, and one on financial and administrative matters. Despite a full agenda, and the need to work into the early hours of the morning on two days, discussions were characterized by a cordial atmosphere and agreement was reached to most participants' satisfaction.

Among the meeting's main achievements was the adoption of a budget that will allow the Secretariat to maintain its current level of staff and activities. In addition, the African Initiative will benefit from additional technical assistance through the provision of a France-based, and funded, technical coordinator, who will work directly with African subregional coordinators, who will be regularly selected from among AEWA focal points. While funds for implementation of the Agreement remain low, and there is no doubt more resources are required to protect migratory birds, many felt that MOP 5 had managed to keep the Agreement "on course" for another three years, and hoped that in 2015 parties would be in a better position to increase their financial contributions.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF AEWA

Migratory species are especially vulnerable to a wide range of threats, including habitat loss in breeding areas, excessive hunting along migration routes and degradation of feeding grounds. In the early 1960s, international conservation organizations began to draw attention to these problems and called for a convention on migratory species.

In response, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) was adopted in 1979 and entered into force in 1983. CMS, also known as the Bonn Convention, recognizes that states must be the protectors of migratory species that live within or pass through their national jurisdictions. CMS aims to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their ranges, and currently has 116 parties.

The Convention was designed to allow for expansion and revision of commitments, and to provide a framework through which parties may act to conserve migratory species and their habitats. One of the mechanisms established by CMS is the development of specialized regional agreements for the conservation and management of migratory species that have an unfavorable conservation status or that would benefit significantly from international cooperation. At present, seven agreements and nineteen memoranda of understanding (MoUs) have been concluded in this regard. The largest of the agreements is the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, also known as the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA).

At the first Conference of Parties (COP 1) to CMS, held in Bonn, Germany, in 1985, delegates decided to prepare an Agreement for the Western Palearctic Anatidae. Consequently, in 1988 the Government of the Netherlands started work on a draft Western Palearctic Waterfowl Agreement as part of its Western Palearctic Flyway conservation programme. During the drafting and consultation process, the name of the Agreement was changed into the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, emphasizing the importance of Africa for migratory birds.

The first consultative meeting of AEWA range states was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in 1994. In 1995, the final negotiation meeting was held in The Hague, the Netherlands. The meeting adopted the Agreement by consensus and accepted the offer of the Dutch Government to provide an Interim Secretariat. Opened for signature in 1996, the Agreement entered into force on 1 November 1999. Only a few days later, the first session of the Meeting of the Parties (MOP 1) took place in Cape Town, South Africa. This meeting, among other achievements, established a Technical Committee and adopted Conservation Guidelines. In 2000, a permanent Secretariat was created, administered by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and co-located with the CMS Secretariat in Bonn. The number of contracting parties currently stands at 66.

AEWA provides for coordinated and concerted action to be taken by the range states throughout the migration system of the waterbirds to which it applies. The Agreement has three annexes. Annex I outlines the Agreement's geographical area, which covers countries in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and parts of Asia and Canada. Annex II lists the species of waterbirds to which the Agreement applies. The list includes 255 species of

birds ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle, including many species of divers, grebes, pelicans, cormorants, herons, storks, rails, ibises, spoonbills, flamingos, ducks, swans, geese, cranes, waders, gulls and terns, and the South African penguin. Annex III contains a comprehensive Action Plan, which describes actions to be undertaken in the areas of: species and habitat conservation; management of human activities; research and monitoring; education and information; and implementation. The Action Plan also contains a table on the conservation status of populations of migratory waterbirds.

AEWA MOP 2: This meeting took place from 25-27 September 2002 in Bonn, Germany. MOP 2 established a Standing Committee and added 65 species to Annex II of the Agreement. It also adopted resolutions on, *inter alia*: phasing out lead shot for hunting in wetlands; draft conservation guidelines on national legislation and on introduced non-native waterbirds; International Implementation Priorities 2003-2007; International Single Species Action Plans; and the budget for 2003-2005.

AEWA MOP 3: This meeting was held from 23-27 October 2005 in Dakar, Senegal. Delegates adopted resolutions on, *inter alia*: avian influenza; climate change in relation to migratory waterbirds; guidelines for criteria used in Table 1 of the Action Plan; online reporting; an international partnership for support of waterbird population assessments; amendments to the annexes to the Agreement; a Strategic Plan; a Communication Strategy; International Implementation Priorities 2006-2008; International Single Species Action Plans; and the budget for 2006-2008.

AEWA MOP 4: This meeting convened from 15-19 September 2008, in Antananarivo, Madagascar. This meeting adopted 20 resolutions including: a budget allowing the Secretariat to maintain its level of staff and activities, with additional costs for interpretation and meeting travel cost support covered by funds from increased minimum annual contributions; and a resolution establishing an African Initiative for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats in Africa, funded partially out of the core budget.

MOP 5 REPORT

On Monday, 14 May, Sabrina Laconi, Deputy Mayor of La Rochelle, representing Mayor Maxime Bono, welcomed participants to the fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Africa-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement and described the importance of species conservation and nature reserves to the city. Béatrice Abollivier, Prefect of the Charente-Maritime department, outlined efforts to facilitate the sharing of the coast and its wetlands by birds and people, lauding collaborations among hunting and nature protection organizations.

In a video message, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner highlighted the upcoming Rio+20 meeting, pointing to the links between waterbird conservation and sustainable development in the context of the green economy.

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Migratory Species, highlighted successful ongoing activities, notably the African Initiative, and stressed the need to strengthen AEWA's knowledge base by further developing the International Waterbird Census (IWC) and ensuring its stable, long-term funding.

Marco Barbieri, Acting Executive Secretary of AEWA, welcomed Ethiopia, Chad, Montenegro and Zimbabwe as the newest parties to the Agreement, noting that they bring AEWA's membership to 66.

Calling La Rochelle an "iconic venue" for migratory waterbird conservation, Jean-Pierre Thébault, Ambassador for the Environment, France, stressed the threatened status of many migratory waterbirds and reiterated his country's support of AEWA.

Nick Williams, Programme Officer, Interim Coordinating Unit for the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) of CMS, welcomed France to the MoU. Ambassador Thébault, calling the agreement a symbol of his country's commitment to the conservation of birds, signed the document.

Barbieri introduced the signing of a new Memoranda of Cooperation (MoC) between the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance and CMS. Nick Davidson, Deputy Secretary General, Ramsar Convention, noted the new agreement would "update, renew and refocus" their already-existing collaboration, and Bert Lenten, CMS Deputy Executive Secretary, noted the importance of wetlands not only for waterbirds but also for other migratory species addressed by CMS.

Øystein Størkersen, AEWA Standing Committee (SC) Chair presented the 2012 AEWA Waterbird Conservation Awards, which recognize individuals and institutions for contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of waterbirds. Awards were presented to the late Brooks Childress, for his work on flamingo conservation, and the International Wader Study Group.

Bart Ebbinge, Chair of the Goose Specialist Group, coordinated by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Species Survival Commission and Wetlands International, delivered a keynote address on managing increasing goose populations. Ebbinge presented case studies relating to brent, white-fronted and pink-footed geese, describing the fine balance between hunting pressure and population size, and stressing the importance of good hunting bag statistics and data on population sizes and dynamics.

Introducing organizational matters, Størkersen said the meeting would address bureaucratic issues, including the budget, but noted that the central focus of AEWA is "conservation on the ground." Barbieri then introduced the Rules of Procedure (AEWA/MOP5.2), outlining two proposed amendments to address inconsistencies between the Rules and the Agreement, and delegates adopted the Rules of Procedure as amended.

Delegates then elected Paul Delduc (France) as Chair of MOP 5, and James Gichia Njogu (Kenya) as Vice-Chair, and adopted the proposed agenda and work programme (AEWA/MOP5.3 Rev.1). Ukraine, the UK, Togo and Kenya were elected to the Credentials Committee.

Delegates established two working groups, electing Norway as Chair and Algeria, assisted by Uganda, as Vice-Chair of the Finance and Administrative Working Group, and South Africa as Chair of the Scientific and Technical Working Group. Delegates then admitted several observers.

In their opening statements, Iceland, Côte d'Ivoire, the Russian Federation and Poland announced that they were in the final stages of accession to AEWA. Chad, Gabon, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe recalled their recent accession to the Agreement. Mauritania, Togo and the African Group stressed the importance of waterbird conservation in the larger context of ensuring sustainable livelihoods, with the African Group highlighting its work on a five-year Plan of Action including activities towards waterbird conservation at the regional level.

REPORTS

In Tuesday's plenary, the SC, Technical Committee (TC), Depositary and Secretariat presented their respective reports. SC Chair Størkersen briefly presented the SC's report (AEWA/MOP5.6). TC Chair Jelena Kralj presented the TC's report (AEWA/MOP5.7), highlighting the TC's new strategy of conducting most of its work in ten separate working groups. The Netherlands provided the status report from the Depositary (AEWA/MOP5.8). He noted there are currently 65 parties, and that with Zimbabwe's accession on 1 June 2012 this would increase to 66.

Barbieri presented the report of the Secretariat 2009-2012 (AEWA/MOP5.9). Barbieri reported on, *inter alia*: recruitment of new parties to the Agreement; strategic cooperation with other organizations; coordination and implementation of Single Species Action Plans (SSAPs); and policy-related developments.

The Secretariat presented the AEWA Information and Communication Technology overview (AEWA/MOP5.10). He outlined the goal of extending virtual workspaces used by TC and SSAP working groups to other working groups of the Agreement. Senegal encouraged the Secretariat to provide translation in French as well as English for its online Africa portal.

OUTCOMES OF CMS COP 10 RELEVANT TO AEWA

In Monday's plenary, Mrema presented on the outcomes of CMS COP 10 that are of relevance to AEWA, highlighting the links between species and habitat protection and AEWA's work on the Critical Site Network Tool. She noted a CMS resolution on flyways, along with efforts on the Central Asian Flyway, and a resolution on the development of an action plan for the conservation of migratory landbirds.

Mrema also noted AEWA-relevant CMS work on, *inter alia*: protection of migratory birds from collision and electrocution by power grids; minimizing risks of poisoning to migratory birds; a review of invasive alien species; impacts of climate change on migratory species; developing a new "CMS family" website to improve data sharing and harmonize reporting; and the future shape of CMS and its instruments, including AEWA.

Germany, on behalf of the European Community (EC), said the EC would present a proposal to mandate the SC to enhance synergies between CMS and AEWA.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AEWA STRATEGIC PLAN

In Monday's plenary, the Secretariat introduced the report analyzing the overall progress of the implementation of the 2009-2017 Strategic Plan (AEWA/MOP5.11), noting that the report concluded overall progress was "very insufficient." He said the most progress had been achieved in the systematic

sustainable use of waterbirds, and that the least progress had been achieved in improving the conservation status of migratory waterbirds. He explained the report included 12 recommendations to improve implementation of the Strategic Plan.

NATIONAL REPORTS AND ONLINE REPORTING PROCESS

In plenary on Monday, the Secretariat introduced the report on national reports and the online reporting system (ORS) and the associated draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5.12, AEWA/MOP5.13 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 1), noting the 69% response rate to the ORS and outlining recommendations to improve reporting.

The Ramsar Convention Secretariat said several of its parties had expressed an interest in an online platform that allows for harmonization and cross-searching between various multilateral environmental agreement's (MEA) databases. Switzerland, Denmark, Senegal and Tunisia reported technical difficulties with submitting their reports online. On the ORS, Tunisia lamented the Secretariat's "top-down approach." The Secretariat recalled that the system and format had been approved by MOP 4, and that the SC and TC had been closely involved in the intersessional work on the ORS.

The Scientific and Technical Working Group considered the draft resolution on Tuesday. Senegal expressed concern over harmonization with reporting under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive, and agreed to consult bilaterally with the EU. On Wednesday in the Working Group, delegates agreed to add the wording "where applicable" to this reference. The resolution was adopted on Friday in plenary without amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 1 Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*:

- recommends that the use of the ORS be considered for adoption by the Secretariats of CMS, its other instruments and potentially other MEAs, to provide a strong basis for harmonization and enable future cost-sharing;
- encourages the donor community to provide financial resources to enable the Secretariat to continue working with UNEP and UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) to implement activities to strengthen the online format for national reporting;
- requests the Secretariat to seek to work with UNEP-WCMC to further develop the ORS and enhance its inter-operability with the systems used for national reporting of other relevant MEAs; and
- decides that the deadline for submission of national reports by parties to MOP 6 shall be 180 days before the MOP.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEWS

On Monday, Szabolcs Nagy, Wetlands International, outlined the 5th edition of the Conservation Status Report (AEWA/MOP5.14) and the preliminary Site Network Report (AEWA/MOP5.15), and the Secretariat introduced the associated draft resolution on addressing gaps in knowledge of and conservation action for waterbird populations and sites important for them (AEWA/MOP5 DR 2). Nagy presented recommendations from both reports, including, for the former, developing concerted efforts to improve monitoring and reducing impacts of biological resource use and water management activities, and for the latter,

designating critical sites and conducting gap-filling surveys in poorly-known areas. On the resolution, several delegations commented on its importance and offered initial comments on, *inter alia*, site designation criteria, whether Ramsar Convention criteria could be used by AEWA, and collaboration between AEWA and the Ramsar Convention. The Scientific and Technical Working Group considered the draft resolution in its meetings on Wednesday and Thursday, and in Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution.

Final Resolution: Among the actions in this resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 2 Rev.2), the MOP calls on parties to ensure that all AEWA populations are covered by international monitoring schemes, to produce reliable international population size and trend estimates, and requests the Secretariat and the TC to:

- in collaboration with the relevant international organizations, provide additional guidance to the parties in this respect, by MOP 6, including monitoring of seabirds and colonial breeding waterbirds; and
- develop a module for the national report format on the designation and management of important sites to be used for informing the next editions of the Report on the Site Network for Waterbirds in the Agreement Area.

The MOP requests the TC to:

- identify priorities for the systematic development of waterbird monitoring, in order to reach the target of a 50% increase by 2017 in the number of populations whose status is assessed on the basis of regular monitoring data, as per the AEWA Strategic Plan 2009-2017; and
- continue to develop with contracting parties, the Report on the Site Network for Waterbirds in the Agreement Area to better reflect information on the management and conservation status of key sites, further develop ways of summarizing the information accessibly and bring a revised and updated version of the report to MOP 6.

The MOP also urges parties to:

- develop individual monitoring programmes to obtain reliable estimates of population sizes and trends of waterbird populations while striving towards harmonized methodology in line with the new AEWA conservation guidelines to be developed by the TC;
- develop and implement national action plans for filling gaps in designation and management of internationally and nationally important sites to establish a comprehensive and coherent flyway network by 2017;
- take more effective measures to reduce the impacts of various forms of unsustainable biological resource use by quantifying their population-level impacts and developing mitigation measures; and
- coordinate the sustainable use of shared populations, especially those with declining trends, *inter alia* through developing coordinated harvest management schemes.

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW PROCESS

On Tuesday in plenary, the Secretariat presented the SC's Implementation Review Process (IRP) report (AEWA/MOP5.16). After reviewing the IRP's aims and procedures, he provided details on the three cases it has addressed to date on: illegal hunting of the critically endangered sociable lapwing

in Syria; proposed drainage of the Salina of Ulcinj for tourism development in Montenegro; and a wind farming project adjacent to Lake Durankulak posing risk to the globally threatened red-breasted goose in Bulgaria. Delegates agreed to add to the proceedings a note asking the SC and TC to continue studying the present and future cases.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AEWA INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION TASKS 2009-2016

The Secretariat introduced this issue in plenary on Tuesday, outlining progress made with regard to the AEWA International Implementation Tasks (IITs) (AEWA/MOP5.17 Corr. 1) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 3 Corr. 1). Noting that the Secretariat had accrued EUR1.4 million in voluntary contributions and currently 13 of the 31 tasks have been partly or fully implemented, he said approximately EUR12 million are required to complete all tasks. He noted that the draft resolution contains a list of the tasks, as revised by the TC. Stressing the continuing funding gap, Norway suggested clear prioritization of the tasks, and Switzerland called for increased efforts to contact parties directly to secure funding for particular tasks.

In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the draft resolution with minor amendments.

Final Resolution: In the resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 3 Corr.1 Rev.2), the MOP: adopts the IITs for 2012-2015, as appended to the resolution; urges contracting parties to support ongoing projects and, where appropriate, to develop new cooperation projects to implement the Agreement; urges parties, instructs the Secretariat and invites specialized international organizations to seek innovative mechanisms and partnerships to enable implementation of the priorities; and requests bilateral and multilateral donors to provide financial assistance to developing countries and countries with economies in transition for the implementation of the Agreement.

IMPLEMENTATION OF WOW UNEP-GEF AFRICAN-EURASIAN FLYWAYS PROJECT AND POST-WOW PROSPECTS

Gerard Boere, Chair, Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) UNEP-Global Environment Facility (GEF) Africa-Eurasian Flyways Project Steering Committee, outlined the implementation of the WOW project and follow-up plans (AEWA/MOP Inf. 5.9) on Tuesday. He noted an independent evaluation had concluded the project had achieved almost all of its original aims, but that the primary critique was the substantial amount of time required by the AEWA Secretariat to identify co-financing sources. Boere underscored that key outputs of the WOW project are being used by other initiatives.

The Secretariat then introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 4) urging parties to make use of the outputs and the GEF to continue funding flyway projects. The EU proposed including reference to the African Initiative, and delegates agreed to refer the matter to the Scientific and Technical Working Group, where it was discussed on Thursday evening.

In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution without amendment.

Final Resolution: In the resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 4 Rev.3), the MOP, *inter alia*:

- urges parties to make greater use of the WOW project's outputs;
- invites regional and subregional forums to consider making use of the Critical Site Network Tool as a means of integrating flyway-scale waterbird conservation with regional and subregional decision making;
- strongly urges the GEF to strive to fund and support further flyway-scale initiatives within and beyond the AEWA region;
- urges contracting parties, donors and the private sector to provide financial support to maintain and improve the Critical Site Network Tool and the Flyway Training Kit; and
- underlines the mutual benefits of integrating the follow-up activities of the WOW Project with the framework of the African Initiative.

IMPLEMENTATION AND REVISION OF THE COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In Tuesday's plenary, the Secretariat introduced this item (AEWA/MOP5.18) and presented the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 5). He highlighted the need for a coordinated revision process to adjust the Communication Strategy to current needs. Norway suggested prioritizing the Secretariat's activities, citing the African Initiative and work on the Critical Site Network as main priorities. Senegal called for geographic priorities in AEWA's communication.

The draft resolution was discussed in the Scientific and Technical Working Group late Wednesday and Thursday nights. Delegates decided to add operative text on ensuring close cooperation between appointed AEWA focal points for communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) and Ramsar Convention CEPA focal points (governmental and non-governmental), where these are not identical.

In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution without further amendment.

Final Resolution: In the final resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 5 Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*:

- instructs the Secretariat to prepare a full revision of the Communication Strategy for adoption by MOP 6;
- requests the TC to involve a CEPA expert in the TC and establish an expert working group on CEPA;
- invites parties to nominate, by December 2012, a suitable governmental or non-governmental national focal point for CEPA;
- encourages parties that are also parties to the Ramsar Convention to ensure close cooperation between the AEWA and Ramsar Convention CEPA focal points, governmental and non-governmental, where these are not identical;
- invites parties, donors and private sector sponsors to provide supplementary financial support for the Communication Strategy; and
- invites parties, range states and other stakeholders to continue supporting the implementation and revision of the Communication Strategy at all levels.

WORLD MIGRATORY BIRD DAY

In plenary on Tuesday, the Secretariat presented a report on the annual World Migratory Bird Day (AEWA/MOP5.19), lauding the growing participation in these celebrations. Outlining the work associated with the Secretariat-driven event and noting

capacity constraints, he asked parties to consider the future of World Migratory Bird Day and possible future steps. Many delegations voiced support for the concept. Senegal, Libya and Mali suggested reconsidering the date of the event, noting that many migratory birds have left Africa by May, and Tunisia recommended the theme should not be changed annually, but always celebrate migratory birds.

PROPOSALS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE AGREEMENT

In Tuesday's plenary, the Secretariat introduced this agenda item (AEWA/MOP5.20 and 5.20 Addendum Rev.1), as well as the draft resolutions on amendments to the AEWA Action Plan (AEWA/MOP5 DR 6) and on guidance for interpretation of terms used in the context of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan (Status of the populations of migratory waterbirds) (AEWA/MOP5 DR 7).

David Stroud, UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee, elaborated on the interpretation of the term "extreme fluctuation in population size or trend" (AEWA/MOP5.21) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 7), which proposes to replace "extreme" with "large." He clarified that "extreme fluctuation," as defined by the IUCN, rarely occurs in the case of waterbirds.

Nagy addressed the interpretation of the term "long-term significant decline" (AEWA/MOP5.22 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 7), presenting the TC proposal to extend the definition of "long-term decline" to include cases in which a "decline can be predicted based on at least 10 years of the most recent data."

The EU suggested that all definitions used within the AEWA context be combined in a single document.

Both draft resolutions were revised by the Scientific and Technical Working Group on Wednesday and Thursday. On Wednesday, in addressing the draft amendments to the AEWA Action Plan, delegates discussed reference to exemptions from prohibited hunting methods and the use of lead fishing weights. These discussions continued on Thursday night; on the first issue, no consensus was reached. On the second, delegates decided not to include text on phasing out the use of lead fishing weights, but rather to add a new paragraph to the Action Plan that calls for further documentation on the nature and scale of the effects of lead fishing weights on waterbirds.

In Friday's plenary, delegates agreed on the Action Plan's new text on exemptions from prohibited hunting methods, concluding that parties may grant such specific exemptions to accommodate for livelihood purposes, where sustainable. Text stating that this should be "within limits with the aim not to expand beyond current practice" was deleted.

The EU then suggested, and delegates agreed, to amend the draft resolution to include the Eurasian curlew among species for which a SSAP is to be developed during the next intersessional period, given the species' recent uplisting to the IUCN Red List of Species in the Near Threatened category. The revised resolution on amendments to the Agreement's Action Plan was adopted, along with the appended Action Plan.

In Friday's plenary, delegates also adopted the revised draft resolution on guidance on the interpretation of terms used in the context of Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan without amendment.

Final Resolutions: In its resolution on amendments to the AEWA Action Plan (AEWA/MOP5 DR 6 Rev.4), the MOP:

- decides to amend the Action Plan contained in Annex 3 of the Agreement as set out in the appendices to the resolution;
- decides in particular to replace the current Table 1 of the Action Plan (status of the populations of migratory waterbirds) with the table as set out in Appendix II to this resolution;
- requests the Secretariat to monitor the implementation of these amendments;
- urges parties to support coordinated monitoring, research and conservation actions, including adaptive management measures, and to support the development of SSAPs for long-tailed duck, Eurasian curlew and velvet scoter during the next intersessional period;
- requests the TC to explore how these multi-species and regional-scale declines might be addressed through a combination of appropriate national and international measures; and
- requests the TC to develop simple guidance that will allow parties to report back to MOP 6 on national knowledge concerning lead fishing weights and waterbirds and the phasing out of lead.

Appendix I to the resolution contains the revised Action Plan and Appendix II contains the revised Table 1 of the Action Plan.

In its resolution on guidance on the terms used in the context of Table 1 of the Action Plan (AEWA/MOP5 DR7 Rev.3), the MOP adopts the following definition of the term "large fluctuations in population size or trend": large fluctuations can be said to occur where population size or distribution area varies widely, rapidly and frequently, typically with a variation greater than a factor of two (i.e., doubling or halving) within a short period of time (typically three years or one generation, whichever is longer). The MOP also adopts the definition of and guidance for interpretation of the term "significant long-term decline" as set out in Appendix 1 to the resolution, and requests the Secretariat to compile into a single document all definitions adopted by previous AEWA MOPs and to make this available on the AEWA website.

Appendix 1 to the resolution defines that a population in "significant long-term decline" is one for which the best available data, information or assessments indicate that it has declined by at least 25% in numbers or range over a period of 25 years or 7.5 generations, whichever is the longer, or for which similar decline can be predicted based on at least 10 years of the most recent data. The appendix also provides guidance for the application of this definition.

ADOPTION OF THE NEW ARABIC TRANSLATION OF THE AGREEMENT

On Wednesday in plenary, the Secretariat introduced the new Arabic translation of the Agreement text (AEWA/MOP5.23), which he explained addressed problems identified with the previous translation and had been prepared under the strengthening waterbird and wetland conservation capacities in North Africa (WETCAP) Project. Expressing appreciation for the translation, Libya, on behalf of Arab Countries, noted some corrections and reviews of the annexes were still required. The MOP agreed parties would submit proposed modifications to the SC by the end of 2012, and tasked the SC with validating the translation.

INTERNATIONAL SINGLE SPECIES ACTION PLANS AND SPECIES MANAGEMENT PLANS

The Secretariat presented the document on SSAPs and Species Management Plans (SMPs) (AEWA/MOP5.24) and the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 8) in Wednesday's plenary. Recalling that 21 SSAPs had been previously approved, he noted that four new plans and one revised plan, plus one SMP, are tabled at MOP 5, while an SSAP for the shoebill is under preparation. He described challenges, including funding and international coordination on SSAP implementation, and introduced the seven recently initiated intergovernmental working groups for SSAP coordination.

Pete Robertson, UK Central Science Laboratory, presented on British efforts to control the ruddy duck in the UK. Recalling that this introduced North American species hybridizes with the native white-headed duck, a globally threatened species, he said less than 1% of the population is now remaining in the UK, but significant populations persist in mainland Europe.

Delegates discussed the draft resolution in the Scientific and Technical Working Group on Thursday night. In Friday's plenary, the EU suggested, and delegates approved, deleting an operative paragraph on the development of a flyway plan for the Eurasian curlew, given the fact that delegates had already decided at this MOP, in its resolution on amendments to the AEWA Action Plan, that a SSAP should be developed for this species. Delegates adopted the revised draft resolution with that amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 8 Rev.1), the MOP, *inter alia*, adopts the international SSAPs for the slaty egret, Bewick's swan, Greenland white-fronted goose, red-breasted goose and sociable lapwing, as well as the international SMP for the pink-footed goose. The MOP calls on parties, and encourages other range states, to implement these and previously adopted SSAPs, and instructs the Secretariat to convene AEWA Species Working Groups to coordinate the implementation of SSAPs for globally threatened and near threatened species. It also requests the TC to revise the priority list for SSAPs after each MOP in light of approved changes to Table 1 of the AEWA Action Plan.

PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AFRICAN INITIATIVE

Evelyn Moloko, Coordinator for the African Initiative, AEWA, outlined the report on the implementation of the African Initiative since MOP 4 (AEWA/MOP5.31) and the proposed draft Plan of Action (PoA) for the Implementation of the Africa Initiative 2012-2017 (AEWA/MOP5.32), on Wednesday in plenary.

Moloko outlined seven sets of outputs following the Initiative's key activity areas, including: recruitment of personnel; a draft PoA for Africa; implementation of the AEWA Small Grants Fund in Africa, with five African projects funded in 2010; and initiation and promotion of synergies.

The African Group called the Initiative "a compass" that guides work towards the PoA, and South Africa asked parties beyond Africa to also "take ownership of this initiative," noting the global benefits of migratory bird protection.

Describing the development of the draft PoA for Africa, Moloko said 54% of African parties had provided feedback. Outlining the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 9), she

highlighted the proposal to establish a "light coordination unit" within the AEWA Secretariat, accompanied by strengthened presence in the subregions.

In the ensuing discussion, the EU praised the "impressive action plan," and announced that France would establish a France-based technical coordinator position to technically assist the African-based subregional coordinators, and provide a link to the AEWA Secretariat. Delegates agreed to consult informally on integrating France's funding offer into the draft resolution.

In Friday's plenary, delegates revisited the revised draft resolution, Uganda suggested deleting specific reference to the future location of the technical coordinator to be sponsored by France, in order to leave options open. After bilateral consultations between Uganda and France on this matter, delegates agreed the technical coordinator would be based in France, at the Tour du Valat Research Centre.

The African Group then outlined its hopes that the African Initiative would be in a position to provide support much closer to the field, noting that the technical coordinator provided by France would be in direct contact with African subregional focal points. The EU noted that the new approach would also allow greater financial support to implementation in the field. Uganda thanked France for its generosity, and highlighted that the French technical coordinator should focus on building technical capacity and on working harmoniously with the Secretariat.

After minor textual amendments to the resolution and to the annexes of the PoA for Africa, the resolution was adopted.

Final Resolution: In the resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 9/ Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*:

- expresses appreciation for the generous offer made by France to implementation of the PoA by providing technical support;
- adopts the PoA for the Implementation of AEWA in Africa (2012-2017);
- decides to support the implementation of the African Initiative, particularly the PoA, through the continued coordination of the African Initiative based at the AEWA Secretariat in Bonn, strengthened by subregional focal point coordinators, and to make the necessary provision in the AEWA core budget 2013-2015 to support this coordinating mechanism;
- instructs the AEWA Secretariat and the SC to establish terms of reference for the management of the above coordination and technical support;
- instructs the AEWA Secretariat to endeavor to secure the necessary financial and other resources for PoA implementation and to collaborate with the CMS, other MEAs, the EU and partner organizations for the implementation of the PoA; and
- requests UNEP, the GEF and other donors to provide financial resources and in-kind resources to support the PoA in Africa.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

In the Scientific and Technical Working Group on Tuesday, TC Chair Jelena Kralj presented draft revised AEWA Conservation Guidelines on: regulating trade in migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5.33); avoidance of introduction of non-native waterbird species (AEWA/MOP5.34); and identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5.35). Baz Hughes, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, presented

the guidelines on the translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes: complementing the IUCN guidelines (AEWA/MOP5.36). The EU proposed amendments to the associated draft resolution on the revised and new guidelines (AEWA/MOP5 DR 10).

The Working Group approved a revised version on Wednesday, and in Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution, including its annex, without amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 10 Rev.2), the MOP adopts:

- the newly developed conservation guidelines for mitigating/avoiding the conflict between migratory birds and electricity power grids and for the translocation of waterbirds for conservation purposes; and
- revised versions of the previously adopted conservation guidelines on identifying and tackling emergency situations for migratory waterbirds, regulating trade in migratory waterbirds and avoidance of introductions of non-native waterbird species.

The MOP also, *inter alia*, requests the TC, to: undertake a critical review of the style and format of AEWA's Conservation Guidelines; make recommendations to the SC based on the review; and continue work to provide relevant information on African species, as mentioned in Annex I of the resolution, as knowledge of these improves through the implementation of the Action Plan for Africa.

Annex I to the resolution defines periods of breeding and pre-nuptial migration for migratory African-Eurasian waterbirds.

ISSUES AFFECTING THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS IN THE AEWA REGION

The Scientific and Technical Working Group considered six draft resolutions on issues affecting the conservation status of migratory waterbirds. On Tuesday, participants heard a presentation by Hein Prinson, Bureau Waardenburg, on the conflict between migratory birds and power grids (AEWA/MOP5.38). On the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 11), Senegal suggested removing reference to Special Protection Areas under the EU Birds Directive, and agreed to consult with the EU bilaterally. On Wednesday, delegates agreed to move that reference to a footnote. The draft resolution was then agreed.

The draft resolution on agrochemicals (AEWA/MOP5 DR 12) was briefly discussed in the Working Group on Wednesday, and approved on Thursday night with minor amendments.

Stroud introduced the resolution on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5 DR 13) to the Working Group on Wednesday, highlighting that the draft resolution encourages parties to complete the identification and designation of national protected area networks. The resolution was approved with minor amendments.

Stroud also introduced the draft resolution on waterbirds, wetlands and the impact of extractive industries (AEWA/MOP5 DR 14 Rev.1), noting commodity prices are driving a mining boom that is impacting wetlands. Delegates approved the resolution with minor amendments. Stroud then introduced the resolution on invasive alien aquatic weeds on waterbird habitats in Africa (AEWA/MOP5 DR 15), which was approved with

minor amendments. Delegates also approved the draft resolution on renewable energy and migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP5 DR 16) with minor amendments.

In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted five revised draft resolutions without further amendment. On the draft resolution on invasive alien aquatic weeds, they added "travel and trade" as potential sources of the introduction of these invasive weeds, and adopted the revised draft resolution with that amendment.

Final Resolutions: In its resolution on **powerlines and migratory waterbirds** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 11 Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*, urges parties and encourages other range states to implement, as appropriate, the Guidelines on how to avoid or mitigate the impact of electricity power grids on migratory birds in the African-Eurasian region, contained in Resolution 5.10 on Conservation Guidelines (AEWA/MOP5 DR 10 Rev.2), and to: avoid, wherever possible, the construction of power lines along major migration flyways and in habitats of conservation importance, where there is a likelihood of significant effects on waterbirds; and promote the use of bird-safe designs in the construction of power infrastructure.

The MOP also urges parties and invites non-contracting parties, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant institutions, as appropriate, to include the measures contained in this resolution in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and relevant legislation, if applicable. The MOP further: encourages electricity companies to disseminate the Guidelines widely within their networks; requests the TC, resources permitting, to monitor the implementation of this resolution in consultation with the CMS Scientific Council; and urges parties and invites UNEP and other relevant international organizations, as well as the energy sector, to financially support the implementation of this resolution.

In its resolution on **adverse effects of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 12 Rev.2), the MOP invites parties and other range states in Africa to implement a regulatory system for agrochemicals in all African countries in order to ensure that illegal trade is diminished, use is controlled and users are trained with a view to decrease the use of agrochemicals that are known to have direct or indirect adverse effects on birds.

The MOP also encourages parties to support range states in minimizing the negative impact of agrochemicals on migratory waterbirds in Africa, *inter alia* by exchanging knowledge and best practice on identifying and mitigating adverse effects of agrochemicals and by encouraging further research on alternative and indigenous crops as well as alternative fertilization methods suitable for Africa.

The MOP further invites relevant intergovernmental organizations, in particular the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, other relevant MEAs and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, to cooperate with the Secretariat in efforts to strengthen the capacity of African countries to control/manage the use of agrochemicals so as to minimize possible negative impacts on human health and the environment.

Finally, the MOP requests the TC and the Secretariat to collaborate with the CMS Scientific Council working group on poisoning of migratory birds on issues of mutual concern.

In its resolution on *climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds* (AEWA/MOP5 DR 13 Rev.1), the MOP, among other things:

- adopts the framework annexed to the resolution as further guidance for actions related to national adaptation measures on the conservation of waterbirds and their wetland and other habitats, and urges parties to implement these principles in their implementation of the Agreement;
- encourages parties to: complete the identification of relevant areas and build national networks of protected areas and other adequately managed areas; undertake national assessments of the resilience of these sites both individually and collectively; and to report such assessments to future MOPs;
- urges parties to report to MOP 6 on adaptation measures relevant to migratory waterbirds that have either been undertaken or are planned, and instructs the Secretariat—working intersessionally with the TC and SC—to develop simple but informative reporting frameworks to this end and implement this for MOP 6;
- urges parties and others to make full use of existing guidance from the Ramsar Convention on the wise use of wetlands (available in the Ramsar Convention’s Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands);
- requests the TC to: review and summarize relevant studies and policies related to climate change and migratory waterbird conservation and management, especially with respect to the creation and management of networks of protected and adequately managed sites, and to bring such an overview to MOP 6; and in future to work collaboratively with both the Ramsar Convention’s Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and the Scientific Council of CMS, on issues of common concern related to impacts of climate change on wetlands and their dependent migratory waterbirds so as to develop common guidance for the Contracting Parties whenever possible; and
- urges national focal points to contribute national and regional issues and expertise from their in-country networks of waterbird scientists and other experts to TC work.

The annex to the resolution presents an AEWA guidance framework for climate change adaptation.

In its resolution on *waterbirds, wetlands and the impact of extractive industries* (AEWA/MOP5 DR 14 Rev.3), the MOP, *inter alia*: urges parties to emphasize the importance of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), particularly in relation to the extractive industries sector, and to apply the SEA guidance adopted in the Ramsar Convention’s Resolution X.17 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and SEA, adapting that guidance as appropriate in order to address specific issues associated with direct and indirect impacts of extractive industries on wetlands important for waterbirds. The MOP encourages parties also to apply the guidance on EIA adopted by the same Ramsar Convention resolution, adapting the EIA guidance, where appropriate, in order to ensure that it adequately addresses direct and indirect impacts on wetlands of the exploration, development, operation, closure and post-closure phases of extractive industrial activities; and parties to ensure that in applying the EIA guidance and other necessary measures,

they adequately address the impacts on wetlands important for migratory waterbirds of the full spectrum of activities associated with extractive industries.

The MOP also: encourages parties to consider the creation of new wetlands or the improvement of existing wetlands of significance for migratory waterbirds in the post-closure phases of extractive industrial activities, through well-planned mining and quarrying activities and well-developed site restoration programmes; and requests the TC to continue to collaborate with the Ramsar Convention on these issues, in particular jointly working with other interested organizations to further develop geospatial analytical tools for identifying those areas where potential conflicts may arise regarding impacts of extractive industry processes on wetlands of importance for migratory waterbirds.

In its resolution on *invasive alien aquatic weeds* (AEWA/MOP5 DR 15 Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*, calls upon parties and other range states in Africa, to enhance efforts towards the recognition, prevention, eradication and control of invasive aquatic weeds in order to avoid adverse effects on migratory waterbirds. It also:

- encourages all parties to support the African range states in minimizing the negative impact of invasive alien aquatic weeds on migratory waterbirds in Africa by, among other things, exchanging knowledge and best practice;
- encourages parties and other range states to make use of available international guidance on the elimination of invasive alien species such as the IUCN Guidelines for the prevention of biodiversity loss due to biological invasion; and
- invites relevant international organizations such as the Ramsar Convention, IUCN, and the European Commission, to cooperate with the Secretariat in efforts to strengthen the capacity of African countries in minimizing the impact of invasive aquatic weeds on waterbirds, while taking note of the AEWA PoA for Africa and the importance of its implementation in this respect.

In its resolution on *renewable energy and migratory waterbirds* (AEWA/MOP5 DR16 Rev.2), the MOP, among other things, calls upon parties to develop and strengthen national renewable energy planning and development to include monitoring in order to avoid and minimize adverse effects of renewable energy installations, including for biofuels, on waterbirds. The resolution lists a number of examples of how this can be achieved, *inter alia*, by carefully evaluating potential sites for the development of new renewable energy installations, and by avoiding sites located within the main migration corridors of migratory waterbirds.

The MOP also calls upon parties to undertake specific measures to reduce the potential negative impact of terrestrial as well as marine wind farms on waterbirds, and to undertake specific measures to assess, identify and reduce potential negative impacts of biofuel production on waterbirds. The MOP urges parties and invites other range states, intergovernmental organizations and other relevant institutions, as appropriate, to include the measures contained in this resolution in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and relevant legislation.

Finally, the MOP requests the TC, in liaison with relevant industry bodies and other interested parties, to identify key knowledge gaps and/or deficiencies in guidance related to the impact of renewable energy production and migratory waterbirds, and to make proposals as to how these might most effectively be filled.

CENTRAL ASIAN FLYWAY

On Friday morning, the CMS Secretariat presented the background on the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) and its associated documents (AEWA/MOP5.39 and Infs. 5.6, 5.7 and 5.8), noting that options explored for a legal framework for the CAF include extending the AEWA geographic range, and developing a new stand-alone agreement for the flyway. He highlighted the geographic, species and mandate overlaps between AEWA and the CAF.

Explaining the lack of resources in the CMS for supporting implementation activities for new agreements, he said that parties could decide to work within the scope of AEWA or develop an option outside the CMS framework. He presented actions requested from the MOP of taking note of CMS Secretariat action on the development of an institutional framework for the CAF action plan, and of considering the next steps.

Kazakhstan supported the proposed extension of the AEWA region to include the CAF flyway, and the Asia-Pacific Shorebird Network strongly encouraged AEWA's involvement in the CAF. The EU welcomed efforts on the CAF and said that if, at its meeting in December 2012, CAF range states express the wish to extend the AEWA range and include its action plan under AEWA, the CAF coordinator should work with the AEWA and CMS Secretariats on the matter. The EU recalled that the final decision on AEWA expansion remains with AEWA parties.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

STANDING COMMITTEE: In plenary on Tuesday, Acting Executive Secretary Barbieri introduced the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the SC (AEWA/MOP5 DR 17). The EU announced the Europe and Central Asia region would forward a candidate for its vacant position following consultations. On Friday morning in plenary, Chair Delduc listed the names of nominated regional representatives and alternates, including the EU's nomination of Ukraine, and noted minor modifications to the wording in two paragraphs. The MOP adopted the revised resolution as amended.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 17 Rev.2), the MOP approves the following list of elected or reconfirmed regional representatives for the SC:

- for Europe and Central Asia: Norway and France, with alternates Ukraine and Croatia;
- for the Middle East and North Africa: Algeria, with alternate Libya;
- for Western and Central Africa: Ghana, with alternate Chad; and
- for Eastern and Southern Africa: Uganda, with alternate South Africa.

The MOP also, among other things: agrees the SC will meet at least twice between MOP 5 and 6; reconfirms the tasks of the SC as set forth in Resolutions 2.6, 4.6 and 4.17; and decides that, in the framework of the Implementation Review Process

established by AEWA MOP 4, the SC will be responsible for identifying funds for the implementation of new reviews, to be withdrawn from the Trust Fund balance. Further, it requests the SC to: contribute to the development of coordinated strategic plans 2012-2014 for the CMS family and express the views of AEWA, through the Secretariat, to the CMS strategic plan (2015-2023) working group.

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE: On Tuesday, the Secretariat presented the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the TC (AEWA/MOP5 DR 18) to plenary, pointing to amendments and adjustments to the *modus operandi* and its annexes proposed in the operative text. Delegates agreed to the proposed list of TC nominees. In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution without further amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 18 Rev.3), the MOP appoints to the TC the members and alternates listed in Appendix I and instructs the TC Chair to identify and appoint an expert on CEPA to facilitate the revision and implementation of the AEWA Communication Strategy. The MOP also, *inter alia*, adopts the *modus operandi* of the TC as set out in Appendix II. In Appendix II, Rule 11 states that the Advisory Group will submit a list of recommended candidates, together with summaries of their expertise, to the MOP for the election of new regional representatives, their alternates and thematic experts.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES AND

PROCESSES: Encouragement of Further Joint

Implementation of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention:

Recognizing the shared goals of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention, the EU introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 19) on Wednesday. Amendments to the text were suggested by Senegal, on the MoC recently signed by the Ramsar Convention and CMS, and by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, including on other joint activities of relevance such as the Global Interflyway Network and the UNEP Information Portal on MEAs (InforMEA). In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution without amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 19 Rev.1), the MOP:

- recognizes mechanisms under the EU Birds Directive for designation of Special Protection Areas in EU member states as well as under the Ramsar Convention for the identification, designation and management of wetlands of international importance, and its designation criteria applicable to migratory waterbirds, which apply throughout the AEWA region, as established mechanisms for, *inter alia*, achieving harmonized implementation of AEWA and the Ramsar Convention, and urges parties to fully utilize the Critical Site Network Tool to identify and designate further such sites;
- requests the AEWA Secretariat to liaise with the Ramsar Convention Secretariat to develop an updated Joint Work Plan under the renewed Ramsar-CMS MoC and, where appropriate, to advise parties on developing consistent and complementary strategic plans and harmonizing AEWA and Ramsar Convention reporting; and
- encourages AEWA parties: which are not already parties to Ramsar to become parties; which are parties to both to pursue common communication strategies jointly under

both treaties; to include AEWA experts in their national Ramsar Committees; to ensure close coordination between their national focal points for AEWA's TC and Ramsar Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel, where these differ; and to develop common implementation indicators for AEWA and the Ramsar Convention, if appropriate.

Promote twinning schemes between the natural sites listed by the AEWA and the network of sites under the Ramsar Convention:

The EU introduced the draft resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 20) on Wednesday. Norway, welcoming the initiative, suggested broadening operative text on identifying twinning opportunities with different regions in a shared flyway to include other parties beyond the EU. The Ramsar Convention Secretariat suggested referring to Ramsar activities equivalent to those mentioned by AEWA. Senegal agreed to consult with the EU on revised text to address concerns about classification and nomenclature of protected areas. In plenary on Friday, delegates adopted the revised draft resolution without amendment.

Final Resolution: In its resolution (AEWA/MOP5 DR 20 Rev.1), the MOP, among other things, encourages contracting parties to:

- promote twinning arrangements with equivalent sites in other countries, within the framework of site management plans;
- consider facilitating the conclusion of twinning schemes between managers or administrators of sites of importance for migratory waterbirds;
- consider, with other contracting parties from the same or another region with which it shares a common flyway, the feasibility of twinning arrangements between sites; and
- consider taking advantage of sessions of the MOP to conclude a twinning agreement for at least one site in their country and a site in another country sharing common migratory waterbirds or conservation issues.

FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

On Tuesday in plenary, the Secretariat introduced four items to be considered under financial and administrative matters. Acting Executive Secretary Barbieri introduced the report on finance (AEWA/MOP5.40 Rev.1), the draft budget proposal (2013-2015) (AEWA/MOP5.41 Rev.1 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 21), and the proposal, emanating from MOP 4, to amend the periodicity of the MOP cycle from three to four years (AEWA/MOP5.43 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 23). The Secretariat introduced the document on the strategic development of waterbird monitoring in the African-Eurasian flyways and the associated draft resolution on establishing a long-term basic structural funding regime for the IWC in the African-Eurasian region (AEWA/MOP5.42 Rev.1 and AEWA/MOP5 DR 22), recalling previous commitments under the Agreement to long-term monitoring. The Finance and Administrative Working Group, chaired by Øystein Størkersen, considered these documents and draft resolutions in their meetings on Tuesday afternoon, Wednesday afternoon in a closed session, Wednesday evening in a small drafting group, and Thursday night.

On Tuesday, Størkersen led participants through initial general comments on the six budget scenarios, retaining or upgrading the current Executive Secretary P4 post, three- or four-year meeting cycles, and the potential transfer of temporary staff positions to

core Secretariat positions. Divergent initial views were expressed on all issues, and delegates requested additional information from the Secretariat on the budgetary implications of upgrading the Executive Secretary post. They also discussed the current level of the Trust Fund, to determine the flexibility of the budget.

On Wednesday, participants agreed to the EU proposal to retain the Executive Secretary position at a P4 level, and some who initially supported a four-year MOP cycle expressed willingness to consider a three-year cycle. Some requested concessions on budget increases along with support to the African Initiative. Participants discussed the options in the draft core budget scenarios of a part-time African Initiative Associate Programme Officer as the African Initiative Coordinator at the Secretariat and a part-time African Initiative Programme Assistant, taking into consideration the voluntary contribution offered by France for a full-time African Initiative technical coordinator position.

A small drafting group met on Wednesday evening, and presented its work to the Working Group on Thursday night, where the draft resolution on the budget was approved.

In plenary on Friday, Størkersen presented the Working Group's outcomes, noting the Group recommended the deletion of draft resolutions on MOP periodicity, noting the matter was included in the budget, and on the IWC, explaining it had not been accorded a budget line. The MOP adopted the draft resolution on the budget and agreed to delete the draft resolution on periodicity. On the IWC, Switzerland underscored that the IWC remains reliant on the budget of Wetlands International and voluntary contributions. He opposed the deletion of the resolution and instead proposed revised language. He noted he would have preferred a resolution deciding to revisit the issue at MOP 6. Delegates adopted the revised resolution.

Final Resolutions: In its resolution on **financial and administrative matters** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 21 Rev.2) and its appendices, the MOP, among other things:

- decides MOP 6 shall take place in 2015;
- adopts the budget for 2013-2015, outlined in Appendix I, for a total of EUR3,078,778 (of which 13% is overhead to UNEP);
- decides to draw EUR370,000 from the reserve of the Trust Fund to support the budget for the next triennium, thereby reducing the assessed contributions required from the parties;
- agrees that parties' minimum contribution shall not be less than EUR2,000 per annum and that exceptionally for the period 2013-2015 the maximum contribution shall be restricted to 20% of the total budget;
- instructs the Secretariat, in preparing the draft budget for MOP 6, to clearly indicate the composition and organization of the Secretariat and the activities carried out by each post identified in the budget to enable parties to effectively prioritize;
- decides that a working capital be maintained at a constant level of at least 15% of the estimated annual expenditure or EUR150,000, whichever is higher;
- approves the establishment of a 50% post of Associate Programme Officer/African Coordinator at the P-2 level to be based in the Secretariat and instructs the Secretariat to seek voluntary contributions to extend the post beyond 50%; and

- requests the UNEP Executive Director to arrange for the recruitment of a new Executive Secretary at the P-4 level who will be selected and appointed before the end of 2012.

In its resolution on **establishing a long-term basic structural funding regime for the IWC in the African-Eurasian region** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 22), the MOP, *inter alia*:

- invites the TC to work with the Waterbird Monitoring Partnership to make progress towards the monitoring related targets of the AEWA Strategic Plan (2009-2017) and to report to MOP 6, and, if required, to propose this issue be revisited at MOP 6, with the aim of securing a long-term sustainable solution to international waterbird monitoring; and
- urges contracting parties to consider making voluntary contributions and invites non-contracting parties and other stakeholders to support the collection and collation of data for the AEWA conservation status reports and population estimates.

OTHER DRAFT RESOLUTIONS

In Friday's plenary, delegates adopted three additional draft resolutions without amendment.

Final Resolutions: In its resolution on the **Aichi biodiversity targets** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 24 Rev.2), the MOP, *inter alia*: adopts the actions set out within the annex of the resolution as AEWA's contribution to the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; requests the TC and SC to work together to assess progress on the Aichi targets; requests that future AEWA status reports and progress reviews are designed to aid the assessment of the Aichi targets; and requests that the AEWA and CMS Secretariats work together with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat to ensure that information on the status of migratory waterbirds are fully included in future CBD assessments against the Aichi targets and to report progress to MOP 6.

In its resolution on **clarifications on the definition of disturbance** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 25), the MOP, among other things, requests the TC to: propose to the MOP definitions of the terms "disturbance" and the "significant" nature of any disturbance that may negatively affect the conservation of waterbirds, at the individual and population levels, in the context of applying the AEWA Action Plan; funding permitting, commission a synthesis of scientific knowledge of disturbance, including activities that are significant and widespread sources of disturbance; and to, funding permitting, produce a simple but comprehensive guidance on the management of disturbance in a form that may be widely translated and disseminated to wetland site managers throughout the Agreement area.

In its resolution on **support for reinforcing capacities with a view to improving laws and policies in favor of waterbirds** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 26), the MOP, *inter alia*: requests the SC to finalize the guidelines prepared by the TC on hunting and trade legislation, including a synthesis of existing migratory waterbird conservation legislation and measures currently in place within parties, to present the guidelines to MOP 6 for consideration, and to propose procedures through which they may be kept up-to-date after MOP 6.

OTHER MATTERS

On Tuesday in plenary, Nick Williams, announced Slovakia as the 40th signatory of the Raptors MoU, and welcomed Rastislav Rybanič (Slovakia) to sign on behalf of his country. Rybanič said species like the red-footed falcon will benefit from this international conservation cooperation.

CLOSING PLENARY

During Friday's closing plenary, delegates adopted a resolution on a tribute to the organizers. In addressing the date and venue of the next AEWA MOP (AEWA/MOP5 DR28), Israel offered to host MOP 6. Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Kuwait and Mauritania voiced concerns with this proposal, noting that many countries would be unable to attend the meeting. South Africa suggested that parties could join efforts in hosting the next MOP. Chair Delduc suggested, and delegates agreed, to alter the wording of the draft resolution to postpone the decision regarding the venue, and recalled that the meeting had decided not to change the periodicity of the MOPs. Delegates then adopted the resolution

Final Resolutions: In its resolution on **tribute to the organizers** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 27), the MOP expresses its gratitude to the French Government for the arrangements and financial investment made to host MOP5, and to the City of La Rochelle, la Ligue pour la protection des oiseaux (LPO), l'Office national de la chasse et de la faune sauvage (ONCFS) and la Fédération départementale des chasseurs de la Charente-Maritime (FDC17) for all the additional support and services.

In its resolution on **date and venue of the next MOP** (AEWA/MOP5 DR 28), the MOP decides that MOP 6 will take place in 2015, and requests the SC to decide on behalf of the MOP on the venue of MOP 6, taking into account the expressions of interest from parties.

The UK, Chair of the Credentials Committee, presented the Committee's report, noting that of the 44 parties present at the meeting, 39 had submitted satisfactory credentials, while three parties had not submitted any credentials.

Delegates then considered and adopted the report of the meeting (AEWA MOP5 Draft Report – Day 1, Day 2, Day 3), agreeing to provide any editorial changes directly to the Secretariat.

In her closing remarks, the EU thanked the French Government and the League for the Protection of Birds, and praised Delduc's chairmanship. Mali thanked France for its "legendary hospitality" and Evelyn Moloko, who he said "works every day to support the African Initiative." The African Group thanked France for its commitment in helping implement the African Initiative. South Sudan thanked the organizers for the opportunity to participate and said it was making efforts to join AEWA as soon as possible.

In his closing remarks, Chair Delduc thanked the Secretariat, which he said had "risen to the challenge," and the Chairs of the SC, TC, and the Working Groups. He stressed that MOP 5 had shown that AEWA is managing the issues that need to be managed and had maintained its course in a climate of adversity. He thanked participants for the cooperative atmosphere and encouraged parties to return to their countries and implement the Agreement.

Acting Executive Secretary Marco Barbieri said the meeting had been a stepping stone for the Agreement, with the African Initiative being warmly supported. He said if such support continues, MOP 5 may, in the future, be perceived as a milestone. He thanked the German Government for funding delegates' travel.

Chair Delduc closed the meeting 4:19 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF MOP 5

The return of migratory birds to France's coast in mid-May saw the concurrent arrival of flocks of delegates from Africa, Asia and Europe to the ancient port city of La Rochelle. Convening under the theme "Migratory waterbirds and people - sharing wetlands," and occurring only a few weeks and months before both the Rio+20 Conference and the Ramsar Convention's 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11), delegates to the 5th Meeting of the Parties (MOP 5) to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) addressed the challenges of how to achieve environmental protection and ecological integrity while protecting communities and promoting sustainable livelihoods.

The outcomes of MOP 5, including a 10% budget increase and support for the African Initiative in the core budget, were lauded by many as positive signals of parties' commitment to support a well-functioning Agreement and action on the ground. Others perceived the outcome as slightly more sobering, expressing concern that despite the Agreement's reliance on scientific and technical information, the International Waterbird Census remains fully dependent on voluntary contributions.

This brief analysis considers the outcomes of MOP 5 in the context of financial austerity, efforts to maximize effectiveness with limited resources, the future of the African Initiative and the ongoing challenges for the Agreement.

DRAWING ON RESERVES

When stopover sites are limited and with long distances in between, migratory birds draw on their reserves to fuel themselves. Similarly, on the heels of the global financial crisis and in the context of austerity measures in place in the "small handful" of major donor countries, MOP 5 delegates agreed to a budget solution of no increased contributions from parties (a "flat" budget). Instead, to fuel their next cycle of activities, they agreed to a drawdown from the Trust Fund. Given this would tax a finite reserve, MOP 5 also aimed for a shorter migration to the next stopover site - agreeing to a three-year MOP cycle, rather than moving to the proposed four-year cycle, in the hope that the global economic picture would be rosier by the end of the triennium. Recognizing the dangers in fully depleting their reserves, MOP 5 also agreed to set aside at least EUR150,000 from the Trust Fund as working capital.

The interest in economy and thrift was recognized by parties not only through specific budget lines and contributions, but also through a number of resolutions linked to developing synergies with other conventions and finding innovative ways to fund AEWA's work through voluntary contributions. Although bolstered by the addition of a part-time Programme Officer for the African Initiative in the core budget (with the aim of being maintained as full-time through voluntary contributions) and the

increase of one staff position to 80% from its current 50%, the AEWA Secretariat remains small. However, rather than further augmenting its personnel and budget, parties recognized the crossovers in the Agreement's activities with other Conventions and Agreements in the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) family, mandating AEWA to work with these multilateral environmental agreement (MEA) partners to achieve its goals. Not only was MOP 5 supported strongly by the CMS Secretariat and also attended by the Ramsar Convention Secretariat, but many discussions and resolutions, referring to overlaps in their mandates and activities, considered ways to harmonize reporting, coordinate the designation of sites for conservation, streamline outreach activities and avoid duplication of efforts in general. These coordination efforts revealed some of the differences between the Conventions, reaffirming their unique contributions to conservation activities—particularly highlighting the differences between species- and habitat-based approaches; nonetheless, they also underscored the value of communication and coordination across MEAs and the emerging synergies among the biodiversity-related agreements.

SECURING THE AFRICAN HABITAT

In 2008 at MOP 4, delegates adopted a resolution on an African Initiative for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds and their Habitats in Africa, aimed at coordinating and improving the implementation of the Agreement in Africa, and allowing the region to play a more prominent role in AEWA. Discussions at MOP 5 revealed that the African Initiative recognizes both the importance of the continent to waterbird conservation and the paucity of support previously accorded to the region for implementation activities. African parties commented through the week on the value of the Initiative to their recruitment and implementation activities. The restructuring of the organization of work within the African Initiative, specifically with the intent of designating subregional coordinators chosen by region from among the existing AEWA National Focal Points, gave many hope that communication and implementation efforts would become more efficient and effective.

In a commitment lauded by African and non-African parties alike, France announced its dedication of funds to establish a post for a technical coordinator for the African Initiative, to be based in France. This offer represented not only a contribution to AEWA's capacity by reducing the funds needed in the core budget for the African Initiative, but also underscored the global importance accorded to implementation activities in Africa by parties outside the region.

AEWA parties worked together to find consensus on supporting the African Initiative through obligatory funds. The outcome—funds for the Programme Officer for the Initiative and for the Small Grants Fund for projects in Africa—illustrated parties' commitment to the stable funding of this programme. One delegate called the inclusion of specific funds for the African region in the core budget a "key breakthrough" never before seen in AEWA's history.

MIGRATORY DETAILS – THE SCIENCE TO INFORM THE POLICY

The lengthy list of documents and draft resolutions put before the Scientific and Technical Working Group at MOP 5

was a signal of the importance of scientific data and actions for the activities of the Agreement, and underscored the role of the Technical Committee in furthering waterbird conservation. By the final plenary on Friday, after two late-night sessions, the Working Group had approved 27 draft resolutions, and progressed on ways for parties to address the multiple threats to migratory waterbirds, ranging from climate change and agrochemicals to renewable energy and power lines.

However, some expressed concern about the lack of support for fundamental data collection on waterbirds, notably, the International Waterbird Census (IWC). The subject of its own resolution associated with financial and budgetary matters, the IWC secured no core funding and, following deliberations, the resolution was nearly cancelled. A last-minute intervention by Switzerland on Friday resulted in the resolution's revival, calling for voluntary contributions to the IWC's work. One proponent lamented that in spite of the value of the data generated by the IWC, it is conducted entirely through voluntary contributions through the non-governmental organization Wetlands International, and remains underfunded and reliant on volunteers. While the agreed-to resolution was not the strong signal of support to the IWC that some had hoped, it does re-affirm the importance of the IWC to the Agreement and leaves the option open of revisiting the funding structure at a later MOP. The alternative, of including no resolution on the IWC, would have sent a negative message to the international community on AEWA's commitment to this important monitoring scheme.

In spite of these concerns, most remained upbeat about the technical advances and growing capacity of AEWA and its parties. As key achievements of the Agreement in supporting implementation on the ground, many praised the Critical Site Network (CSN) Tool, the AEWA Flyway Conservation Toolkit (FCT) and the Implementation Review Process (IRP). These involve, respectively, software that connects databases on waterbird sites, materials supporting capacity building on the ground and a process for quick diplomatic responses to emergent threats to species or habitats.

SEEING THE FLYWAY FOR THE BIRDS: LOOKING FORWARD

The active deliberations of MOP 5 left open questions as to the future organization of work for parties. While the meeting included a full-day excursion for delegates on its penultimate day, to allow for resolution of all agenda items delegates found themselves negotiating into the early hours of the morning on both Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Increasing the capacities of African parties to participate in MEA negotiations has been a focus for the African Group over the past few years; one participant suggested that since the increase in the number of actively participating parties has led to an increase in negotiating time, AEWA may need to re-evaluate its schedule to accommodate this. As with migratory birds adapting their physiology for migration, several said AEWA must also adapt, institutionally and administratively, to the changing needs of parties.

By the meeting's close on Friday afternoon, it was clear to most participants that AEWA had its larger goals—implementation of its long-term strategic goals and activities for conservation—clearly in sight. The inclusion of the African

Initiative in the core budget was a significant outcome of the meeting, indicating parties' commitment to on-the-ground activities and key regions in need of conservation support.

The dedication of delegates to the substantive work of the meeting—even at the expense of sleep and exploring the host city and its surroundings—signaled to most the ongoing commitment of parties to the achievement of the goals of the Agreement. However, several questions remain unanswered. As MOP 5 left the scientific work of the IWC dependent on voluntary funding, will this critical scientific work find the needed support from other sources, and, if not, could AEWA function without its data? With the Agreement's future regional scope pending requests from the Central Asian Flyway, will MOP 6 parties be faced with the question of expanding its geographic range? And with its increased funding for the next triennium based on Trust Fund draw-downs, and long-term funding contingent on a turnaround in the economic situation of several key donors, will AEWA secure the resources needed for its long-term implementation? It remains to be seen how action by the parties can outpace the increasing challenges of, among other changes, climate change, agrochemical use, power lines and renewable energy generation. Yet the progress made in La Rochelle indicates that—to turn a forest metaphor to an avian one—parties were able to keep their sights on the flyways, and not be blinded by the birds.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

20 years, 20 percent – how to proceed with Natura

2000: This meeting takes place on the 20th anniversary of the EU Habitats Directive, which came into force in 1992. The conference will include an interdisciplinary debate, including German Ministers with responsibility for climate change, agriculture, the environment and health. **date:** 21 May 2012 **location:** Berlin, Germany **contact:** NABU (Bird Life Germany) **phone:** +49-3028-4984-1573 **email:** Marcel.Faska@NABU.de **www:** <http://www.birdlife.org/community/2012/05/join-nabu-on-may-21-to-celebrate-and-learn-about-natura-2000-in-germany/>

UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD):

This meeting, also referred to as Rio+20, will mark the 20th anniversary of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, which convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. **dates:** 20-22 June 2012 **location:** Rio de Janeiro, Brazil **contact:** UNCSD Secretariat **email:** uncsd2012@un.org **www:** <http://www.uncsd2012.org/>

Ramsar COP 11: The 11th meeting of the parties (COP 11) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat will be preceded by the 44th meeting of its Standing Committee, planned for 4 July 2012, and an additional day of regional meetings on 5-6 July 2011. The Standing Committee agreed that the broad theme for World Wetlands Day 2012 and COP 11 is "Wetlands, Tourism and Recreation." **dates:** 6-13 July 2012 **location:** Bucharest, Romania **contact:** Ramsar Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-999-0170 **fax:** +41-22-999-0169 **email:** ramsar@ramsar.org **www:** <http://www.ramsar.org>

62nd Meeting of the CITES Standing Committee: The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) Standing Committee provides policy guidance to the Secretariat concerning the implementation of the Convention and oversees the management of the Secretariat's budget; coordinates and oversees, where required, the work of other committees and working groups; carries out tasks given to it by the Conference of the Parties; and drafts resolutions for consideration by the Conference of the Parties. **dates:** 23-27 July 2012 **location:** Geneva, Switzerland **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-34-17 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** http://www.cites.org/eng/com/sc/index.php

British Bird Fair: Birdfair 2012 is raising funds to support conservation action in the East Asian/Australasian Flyway. **dates:** 17-19 August 2012 **location:** Rutland, United Kingdom **contact:** Birdfair Office **phone:** +44-157-277-1079 **fax:** +44-157-275-6611 **email:** etate@birdfair.org.uk **www:** http://www.birdfair.org.uk

IUCN World Conservation Congress 2012: The Congress theme will be Nature+, a slogan that captures the fundamental importance of nature and its inherent link to every aspect of people's lives, including: nature+climate, nature+livelihoods, nature+energy and nature+economics. **dates:** 6-15 September 2012 **location:** Jeju, Republic of Korea **contact:** IUCN Congress Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-999 0336 **fax:** +41-22-999-0002 **email:** congress@iucn.org **www:** http://www.iucnworldconservationcongress.org/

CBD COP 11: The agenda for the next meeting of the CBD COP includes consideration of, *inter alia*: the status of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits arising from their Utilization; implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020 and progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; issues related to financial resources and the financial mechanism; and biodiversity and climate change. This meeting will be preceded by the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. **dates:** 8-19 October 2012 **location:** Hyderabad, India **contact:** CBD Secretariat **phone:** +1-514-288-2220 **fax:** +1-514-288-6588 **email:** secretariat@cbd.int **www:** http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=COP-11

Meeting to Negotiate the Institutional and Legal Framework for the Central Asian Flyway: This meeting, held back-to-back with the first meeting of signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU), will consider options for a legal and institutional framework for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF). **dates:** 12-13 December 2012 **location:** Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates **contact:** UNEP/CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2426 **fax:** +49-228-815-2449 **email:** secretariat@cms.int **www:** http://www.cms.int/species/CAF/meetings.htm

CITES COP 16: The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES is expected to convene in 2013. **dates:** 3-15 March 2013 **location:** Thailand **contact:** CITES Secretariat **phone:** +41-22-917-81-39/40 **fax:** +41-22-797-3417 **email:** info@cites.org **www:** http://www.cites.org/

CMS COP 11: The next meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties will be held in the period October - December 2014. **dates:** to be announced **location:** Paraguay **contact:** UNEP/CMS Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2426 **fax:** +49-228-815-2449 **email:** secretariat@cms.int **www:** http://www.cms.int/

Sixth Meeting of the Parties (MOP 6) to the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA): The dates and location of AEWA MOP 6 will be decided by the AEWA Standing Committee. **dates:** 2015 **location:** to be announced **contact:** AEWA Secretariat **phone:** +49-228-815-2414 **fax:** +49-228-815-2450 **email:** aewa@unep.de **www:** http://www.unep-aewa.org/

GLOSSARY

AEWA	African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement
CAF	Central Asian Flyway
CEPA	Communication, Education and Public Awareness
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWC	International Waterbird Census
MEA	Multilateral environmental agreement
MoC	Memorandum of Cooperation
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ORS	Online Reporting System
PoA	Plan of Action
Raptor MoU	CMS MoU on the Conservation of Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia
SC	Standing Committee
SMP	Species Management Plan
SSAP	Single Species Action Plan
TC	Technical Committee
WOW	Wings Over Wetlands UNEP-GEF African-Eurasian Flyways Project



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- Daily news reports researched and written by our own experts and organized in a **freely accessible, searchable on-line knowledgebase**;
- A **comprehensive calendar of upcoming events** related to international sustainable development policy, which can be downloaded to your own online calendar;
- And a **community listserve**, which exclusively delivers email updates of the most recent additions to our knowledgebases, as well as announcements by listserve members regarding their organizations' sustainable development activities.

Each knowledgebase focuses on a specific environmental challenge or region, as noted below:



Sustainable Development Policy & Practice
<http://uncsd.iisd.org/>



Climate Change Policy & Practice
<http://climate-l.iisd.org/>



SIDS Policy & Practice
<http://sids-l.iisd.org/>



Biodiversity Policy & Practice
<http://biodiversity-l.iisd.org/>



Sustainable Energy Policy & Practice
<http://energy-l.iisd.org/>



Latin America & Caribbean Regional Coverage
<http://larc.iisd.org/>



African Regional Coverage
<http://africasd.iisd.org/>