



AEWA MOP-2 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2002

Delegates met in a morning Plenary to hear reports of the Credentials Committee and the Technical Working Group, and to discuss financial matters and conservation guidelines. The Technical Working Group met in morning and afternoon sessions to discuss proposed amendments to the Action Plan, phasing out lead shot, conservation guidelines and the international implementation priorities for 2003-2007. The Administrative and Financial Working Group met to discuss, *inter alia*, the headquarters agreement, the small conservation grants fund, institutional arrangements and financial matters.

PLENARY

Credentials Committee Chair Semega noted that the credentials of 18 out of the 32 Parties registered had been accepted so far. Technical Working Group Chair Mungroo reported proposals to re-categorize and add species to the AEW Action Plan, and underscored discussions on updating the Action Plan and enhancing the analytical content of the conservation status report.

AEWA Executive Secretary Lenten introduced the documents on financial matters (AEWA/MOP 2.24, 2.24 (Rev.1) and Add., and AEWA/Res.2.6 and 2.7). He said the 2000-2002 budget was modest and called for a realistic 2003-2005 budget to: recruit staff; fund regional awareness-raising campaigns and species action plan implementation; support the AEW GEF projects; and establish a standing committee. On accepting contributions in kind in lieu of cash (AEWA/MOP 2.25 and AEWA/Res.2.8), Lenten explained that this is unprecedented and is intended to help Parties that have difficulties fulfilling their financial obligations. He noted that this would realistically only be helpful for big contributors. SIERRA LEONE asked who would determine the cash value of and the criteria for contributions in kind and suggested establishing a maximum cash-value beyond which in kind contributions could not be accepted.

On establishing a Small Conservation Grants Fund (AEWA/MOP 2.26 and Res.2.9), Lenten noted its usefulness for awareness raising projects, and noted the Ramsar Convention's experience in this regard. He suggested establishing another fund to ensure a sustainable replenishment of the grants fund.

ADOPTION OF CONSERVATION GUIDELINES:

Myrfyn Owen (Just Ecology Environmental Consultancy) introduced the draft Guideline on Avoidance of Introduction of Non-Native Species of Waterbirds (AEWA/MOP 2.13 and AEW/Res.2.3). He reviewed the risks that non-native species pose to native populations, citing the North American Ruddy Duck, Canadian Goose, and Mallard as examples. Noting that 113 non-native species and subspecies exist in the wild in the AEW area, of which five are high or medium risk to native wildlife, he outlined necessary measures to combat the problem.

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP

ACTION PLAN AMENDMENTS: On amendments to the Action Plan (AEWA/MOP/2.9 and AEWA/Res.2.1), the Working Group agreed that the resolution should: instruct the Technical Committee to develop guidelines on long-term decline; review and develop criteria for delimiting geographical division of species populations; carry out work on wetland-dependent species that are not waterbirds *sensu stricto*; and reflect agreed changes to the conservation status table.

CONSERVATION GUIDELINES: Regarding the draft resolution on Conservation Guidelines (AEWA/Res.2.3), SWITZERLAND proposed referring to the Guidelines on National Legislation for Migratory Waterbird Species Protection (AEWA/MOP 2.12) and on Avoidance of Introduction of Non-Native Migratory Species (AEWA/MOP 2.13) in separate resolutions. He also suggested using terminology consistent with the CBD's decisions on invasive species. Owen said the guideline's scope is broader than just "invasive" species. Delegates agreed to invite multilateral environmental agreements to take note of the guidelines. The UK and GERMANY suggested that the guidelines be remitted to the Technical Committee.

PHASING OUT LEAD SHOT: On the draft resolution on Phasing Out Lead Shot for Hunting in Wetlands (AEWA/Res.2.2), BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL called on countries to phase out lead shot in accordance with self-imposed, published timetables. He also suggested reference to promoting awareness among authorities and hunting communities, funding for enforcement of relevant laws, and facilitating the production and availability of non-toxic shots. THE EU FEDERATION OF ASSOCIATIONS OF HUNTING AND CONSERVATION (FACE) expressed concern over allocating finances for enforcement of relevant laws, and rather, with ZIMBABWE, suggested

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financing programmes to phase out lead shot. BENIN stressed the need to assist developing countries in implementing phasing out measures, while BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL added economies in transition. The Working Group agreed to encourage financial support to carry out awareness-raising activities leading to legislation on phasing out lead shot. NORWAY, supported by ZIMBABWE, suggested phasing out lead shot beyond wetlands. Some delegates opposed the proposal and it was withdrawn.

IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES PLAN FOR 2003-2007: On the International Implementation Priorities (AEWA/Res.2.4), ZIMBABWE drew attention to the lack of feedback on censuses carried out in Africa. The Group agreed to add reference to supporting international waterbirds censuses in Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia. SWITZERLAND proposed mentioning synergies with other organizations and giving prominence to the African-Eurasian Flyway GEF project. DENMARK proposed revising the telemetry project (AEWA/MOP 2.19) to include a forward-looking review of priority populations for satellite telemetry. The Group agreed to incorporate the proposals.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL WORKING GROUP

The Administrative and Financial Working Group, chaired by Mbarack Diop (Senegal), met in the morning and afternoon.

CENTRAL/SOUTH ASIAN FLYWAY: On the development of an action plan for the Central/South Asian Flyway (AEWA/MOP 2.21), AEWA Executive Secretary Lenten outlined three possibilities: development of a new CMS agreement; extension of the AEWA area; or development of a non-legally binding instrument. Lenten noted that 9 out of the 22 Range States are in the AEWA area. One participant drew attention to AEWA's large workload, and cautioned against expanding the region of AEWA at present. Other delegates cautioned against forcing the flyway project on Central and South Asian States. Several participants requested information on the financial implications for AEWA and opposed using AEWA funds for projects beyond the AEWA area. The Group agreed to record the views expressed in the MOP report and to revisit this proposal at MOP-3.

HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT: On the Headquarters Agreement (AEWA/MOP 2.22 and Res.2.11), the Working Group agreed to forward the endorsed resolution to the Plenary, with some countries reiterating their doubts about the efficiency of the current co-location arrangements. On establishing a Standing Committee (AEWA/MOP 2.23 and AEWA/Res.2.6), delegates discussed: expanding the Bureau as opposed to creating a Standing Committee; the composition of the Committee and representation issues; and the frequency of meetings. They agreed to forward the draft resolution to the Plenary with an amendment on regional groupings, joining Europe and Central Asia as one group.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: On the draft resolution on the Institutional Arrangements: Technical Committee (AEWA/Res.2.5), delegates agreed that Parties should appoint qualified technical experts to act as focal points for Technical Committee matters, and recommended that the Committee

provide scientific and technical advice. The group agreed to forward the draft resolution, with amendments, for consideration by the Plenary.

FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

Regarding the draft resolution on Financial and Administrative Matters (AEWA/Res.2.7), the Secretariat outlined the budget estimates for 2003-2005. Participants discussed minimum contributions and upgrading the Executive Secretary's salary level. Delegates discussed funding projects from the Trust Fund rather than from the core budget, with the understanding that no more than US\$200,000 should be withdrawn from the Trust Fund. Some delegates warned against cutting necessary expenditures, such as MOP-related ones, and against overburdening the Trust Fund. Others questioned the inclusion of GEF project expenditures in the AEWA budget. Lenten noted that the GEF Secretariat encourages Conventions to contribute funds to projects they initiate.

SMALL CONSERVATION GRANTS FUND: On the draft resolution on the Future Development of the Small Conservation Grants Fund (AEWA/Res.2.9), delegates suggested that the grants be available only to least developed countries. Delegates agreed that the Standing Committee, in consultation with the Technical Committee, should review and decide upon small grant applications. Delegates also expressed concern that 13% of voluntary contributions may be taken by UNEP.

OTHER MATTERS: Working Group participants agreed to forward the draft resolutions on the Guidelines for the Acceptance of Contributions in Kind in Lieu of Cash (AEWA/Res.2.8) and on the Tribute to the Organizers (AEWA/Res.2.12) to the Plenary without amendments. On the draft resolution on the Date, Venue and Funding of MOP-3 (AEWA/Res.2.10), one non-Party country expressed tentative interest in hosting the meeting. It was also agreed that the meeting should be held after the Ramsar Convention's COP.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Despite concern that the AEWA agenda was burdensome, delegates expressed satisfaction that they were able to finish the work at hand during evening meetings. Although work in the Financial Working Group appeared to echo the CMS debate over the budget increase, delegates appeared confident that it would not hold up the remaining deliberations. Some participants thought guidelines on invasive species could be a bone of contention as it is in other fora, as could be the proposal of "in kind in lieu of cash" contributions, but discussions on those issues went more smoothly than expected.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will convene at 9:30 am in the Plenary Hall to adopt AEWA's resolutions, and to adopt the meeting's report.