



## AEWA MOP6 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2015

On Wednesday, AEWA MOP6 met in morning plenary to address financial and administrative matters as well as issues affecting the conservation status of migratory waterbirds in the AEWA region, including renewable energy technologies and marine fisheries. In the afternoon, the working groups on finance and administrative matters and on scientific and technical matters started their work in parallel. The former working group, which was closed to observers, discussed the draft budget proposal for 2016-2018, including four possible budget scenarios. The latter discussed twelve draft resolutions, suggesting minor amendments.

### FINANCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

#### REPORT ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

AEWA Executive Secretary Jacques Trouvilliez introduced the report on finance and administrative issues over the period 2013-2015 (AEWA/MOP 6.19), and summarized, *inter alia*, how the core budget for this period was implemented; income and expenditures; and unpaid contributions, although he stressed that “we’re not here to criticize parties, but rather to help you meet your pledges.”

#### RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR THE

**IMPLEMENTATION OF AEWA:** Trouvilliez introduced, and SOUTH AFRICA presented, the draft resolution on resource mobilization for the implementation of AEWA (AEWA/MOP6 DR21), with SOUTH AFRICA stressing the equal but differentiated financial responsibilities of AEWA parties.

### NEW ARABIC TRANSLATION OF THE AGREEMENT TEXT

Trouvilliez noted that the new draft official Arabic version of the Agreement text had not been finalized yet. He thanked the Depositary, the Netherlands, for its work on this translation, which he said would be available “in a few months.” He introduced a draft resolution (AEWA/MOP6 DR2) calling, *inter alia*, for the Depositary to transmit certified copies of the new Arabic version to range states. Delegates agreed to continue discussions in the Finance and Administrative Working Group.

### ISSUES AFFECTING THE CONSERVATION STATUS OF MIGRATORY WATERBIRDS

#### RENEWABLE ENERGY:

Sergey Dereliev, AEWA Secretariat, presented the review of the occurrence and magnitude of the conflict between migratory animals and renewable energy technologies deployment (AEWA/MOP

6.38). He said hydro and wind power mostly impact waterbirds locally, and impacts at the population level are only potential. He outlined recommendations on: pre-construction assessments and post-construction monitoring; identification of species migratory routes and critical sites; cumulative impacts and population modeling; and developing guidelines on environmental impact assessments and strategic impact assessments. ISRAEL called for stricter AEWA recommendations on the type of renewable energies to be deployed, and their location.

**MARINE FISHERIES:** Christina Hagen, BirdLife South Africa, presented the review of potential impacts of marine fisheries on migratory seabirds within the Afrotropical region (AEWA/MOP 6.39). She highlighted that bycatch by gillnets, long and trawl lines are direct effects of marine fisheries while competition and changed behavior are indirect effects. Among recommendations, she highlighted: improving collaboration within the region; researching the impact of gillnet fishing; and focusing on overfishing by improving management of foreign fleets and paying closer attention to forage fisheries. SENEGAL called for AEWA, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Convention on Biological Diversity to find synergies and create protected marine sites beyond the 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

#### STATUS, THREATS AND CONSERVATION

#### PRIORITIES FOR AEWA SEABIRD POPULATIONS:

Hagen presented the report (AEWA/MOP 6.40) and the related draft resolution on improving the conservation status of African-Eurasian seabirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR9 Rev.1). Among main threats to seabirds throughout the region, she identified: combined impacts of climate change and human impacts on fish; bycatch; human harvesting; predation by invasive species such as rats and cats; oil spills; and disturbance and mortality from at-sea developments. She highlighted several recommended actions, including: identifying important bird areas and translation of these into protected areas; managing existing protected areas; quantifying seabird mortality; monitoring the scale and impact of invasive species and working towards their eradication; and elaborating oil spill response schemes.

**OTHER DRAFT RESOLUTIONS:** David Stroud (UK), Chair of the Technical Committee (TC), presented draft resolutions on conservation and sustainable use of migratory birds (AEWA/MOP6 DR4 Rev. 1), update guidance on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR6) and avoiding unnecessary additional mortality of migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR12).



### **INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Standing Committee (SC) Chair Øystein Størkersen (Norway) presented the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the SC (AEWA/MOP6 DR16), outlining its provisions on appointment of members, funding and requirements for the SC. He noted five vacancies for regional representatives in the SC: two for Europe and Central Asia and one each for Middle East and Northern Africa, Western and Central Africa, and Eastern and Southern Africa.

Dereliev presented the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for the TC (AEWA/MOP6 DR17). He presented the list of names for regional representatives and alternates proposed for the TC as well as the TC workplan for 2016-2018, and the request for the TC to establish a register of interests in which TC members declare potential conflicts between their personal and professional interests and responsibilities to AEWA.

### **CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE**

The NETHERLANDS, Chair of the Credentials Committee, noted that some credentials were still pending and final results would be shared in plenary on Saturday.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

During a brief ceremony led by Nick Williams, CMS Secretariat, Croatia and Israel signed the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU).

Mamadou Kane, on behalf of the Executive Director of UNEP, read a statement expressing concern over UNEP's potential exclusion from any aspect of the Finance and Administrative Working Group discussions.

### **FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE WORKING GROUP**

This working group, chaired by Chandanee Jhowry (Mauritius), was closed to observers. It discussed the draft budget proposal for 2016-2018 (AEWA/MOP 6.20 Rev.1 and DR18 Rev.1), including four possible budget scenarios, with delegates agreeing to revisit the discussion in the Working Group on Thursday.

### **SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP**

This working group, chaired by David Stroud (UK), addressed twelve draft resolutions.

On the resolution on amendments to the AEWA annexes (AEWA/MOP6 DR1), the EU, on behalf of its member states, voiced reservations about the draft resolution, as some amendments are not in accordance with the EU Birds Directive. ICELAND highlighted that upgrading the long-tailed duck might mean he will have to make a reservation. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL proposed an additional operative paragraph to acknowledge the uplisting of eleven AEWA species onto the IUCN Red List. It was decided to defer this agenda item until Thursday afternoon to allow for informal consultations.

On strengthening monitoring of migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR3), the EU, on behalf of its member states, questioned the need to create a distinct AEWA Waterbird Monitoring Fund to support monitoring work, suggesting the AEWA Trust Fund was sufficient. The Secretariat clarified that both the new fund and the AEWA Trust Fund would finance the same monitoring work, but cater to different types of donors. Delegates agreed to revisit the issue in the Working Group on Thursday.

On conservation and sustainable use of migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR4), delegates suggested minor textual amendments. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL suggested inclusion of the bar-headed goose, Egyptian goose, and black swan as invasive alien species in certain paragraphs, with HUNGARY opposing including the bar-headed goose. Delegates agreed to revisit the issue in the Working Group on Thursday.

On revision and adoption of conservation guidelines (AEWA/MOP6 DR5), NORWAY requested changing "adopts" to "takes note of" in the operative text. The Secretariat said this change would potentially weaken the wording and set a precedent. Delegates agreed to keeping "adopts" but added text stressing the non-legally binding nature of the guidelines, as well as a textual change suggested by SAUDI ARABIA, with all amendments to be finalized in the Working Group on Thursday.

On adoption of guidance and definitions (AEWA/MOP6 DR7), delegates agreed to the draft resolution with several minor amendments.

Delegates also discussed, and suggested minor amendments to, draft resolutions on: update guidance on climate change adaptation measures for waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR6); adoption and implementation of International Single Species and Multi-Species Action and Management plans (ISSAPs and IMSAPs) (AEWA/MOP6 DR8); improving the conservation status of African-Eurasian seabirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR9 Rev.1); addressing the impacts of renewable energy deployment on migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR11); avoiding additional and unnecessary mortality of migratory waterbirds (AEWA/MOP6 DR12); draft International Implementation Tasks 2016-2018 (AEWA/MOP6 DR13); and institutional arrangements: Technical Committee (AEWA/MOP6 DR17). These revised draft resolutions will be discussed again in the Working Group on Thursday.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

As MOP6 approached its midway point, delegates seemed to enjoy the concrete, conservation-oriented items on Wednesday morning's agenda, featuring detailed presentations on issues affecting the status of migratory waterbirds throughout their flyways, accompanied by stunning photographs of the species and landscapes concerned. AEWA's business-attire-clad delegates, many of whom are happiest wearing boots and binoculars in the field, could finally let their minds soar off to wilder places – migrating away from administrative matters, and back to their original passion for waterbird conservation.

Delegates were forced to land back on Earth in the afternoon, at least in the Finance and Administrative Working Group. Just before plenary closed before lunch, UNEP made a statement protesting the organization's potential exclusion from certain discussions in that working group, a scenario they described as "unconscionable – I repeat, unconscionable!" In that working group – from which ENB was excluded, setting a disappointing precedent for transparency at AEWA MOPs – delegates debated budget scenarios. The Technical and Scientific Working Group, by contrast, was open to observers and made a terrific start on its work, churning through all twelve draft resolutions up for review (although sending only one directly to plenary) and leaving the Secretariat surprised and pleased.