



## The Wadden Sea

# Strengthening Management and Research along the African Eurasian Flyway

Workshop Report, Wilhelmshaven 2011



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WORLD HERITAGE SITE



Authors

Gerard Boere, Boere Conservation Consultancy  
Marc van Roomen, SOVON Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology

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Photos

Gerold Lürßen  
John Frikke

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Summary, conclusions and  
recommendations of the international  
flyway workshop Wilhelmshaven,  
Germany, March 22-23, 2011

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# 1 Introduction and Background

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The workshop in Wilhelmshaven, Germany, 22/23 March 2011. was initiated by the German and Dutch Governments to discuss the possible consequences and actions following a request from the World Heritage Committee when nominating the Dutch and German parts of the Wadden Sea as a World Heritage Site (in June 2009). That request stated:

***‘.....strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways, which play a significant role in conserving migratory species along these flyways.’***

As a follow up of the decision of the World Heritage Committee the 11th Wadden Sea Ministerial Conference at Sylt agreed to engage in a close cooperation with the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) to promote and strengthen cooperation on management and research with relevant state parties and establish cooperation for the protection and management of migratory birds relying on the Wadden Sea.



The Wadden Sea was added to the World Heritage List in Sevilla, 2009.

A preliminary survey of possible activities to be undertaken was already prepared (Boere 2010). This survey was initiated by the Dutch Team working on the Wadden Sea restoration project called: ‘Towards a healthy Wadden Sea ecosystem for nature and man’ (‘Programma Naar een Rijke Waddenzee’). This overview contains suggestions for the short-, medium-, and long term within the whole East Atlantic Flyway covering the various fields of possible interests such as science, training, capacity building, awareness, etc. The total number of projects and programmes ongoing, prepared or under development, which could in principle be supported, however is large and they differ considerably in size, duration and the number of stakeholders involved. Therefore more thinking and discussion is needed to set the priorities within the available resources; the workshop was an important step in that process.

The workshop was prepared as a joint activity by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat; SOVON Dutch Centre for Field Ornithology (programme development, background document on monitoring; guiding presentations; final report) and Boere Conservation Consultancy (programme development, guiding speakers, chairing workshop and final report).

To have a broad representation of flyway stakeholders, participants were invited representing science, policy, training and capacity building, awareness and management. At the same time participants came from various geographical regions: Russia/Arctic, Europe, North and West Africa and representing a number of international organisations such as BirdLife International, Wetlands International, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, CWSS, OMPO, CAFF etc. Almost 40 people attended the workshop (see Annex 6 with names and contact information)

## Objectives

The ToR for the workshop states the following as the main objective:

***‘to provide specific guidance for priorities in international cooperation enhancing conservation and proper management of migratory waterbirds connecting the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway.’***

The more specific objectives are listed in Annex 1. On that basis a number of speakers was approached and some more specific guidelines were given for the contents of each of the requested presentations; for the complete programme see Annex 2. For the workshop also a background document was prepared giving an overview of monitoring work on numbers, reproduction and survival of waterbird populations of the East Atlantic Flyway important in the Wadden Sea context (van Roomen *et al.* 2011). All documents can be viewed through the website of the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat ([http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/flyway\\_2011/workshop.html](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/flyway_2011/workshop.html)).



## 2 Conclusions of Presentations

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The programme was divided into two main subjects: needed policy/management/training etc. in the broadest sense on day one and monitoring and research on day two (Annex 2). Day one started with two generic presentations on the status of Wadden Sea birds by Jan Blew and the Wadden Sea in the flyway system by Theunis Piersma. Thereafter a number of presentations on international cooperation as well as the need for capacity building, training, awareness and case studies from some African countries on integrated management, birds and livelihood aspects were presented. Day two started with a presentation by Tony Fox on the information need about the demography of migratory waterbirds for conservation and management. After that, case studies were presented on monitoring in the Arctic, North and West Africa, and ongoing research projects analysing migration routes and connectivity of Wadden Sea birds in relation to habitat quality. At the end, presentations on the needed international cooperation for the monitoring of flyway trends and vital rates were presented.

All presentations can be viewed on the website of the CWSS ([www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/flyway\\_2011/workshop.html](http://www.waddensea-secretariat.org/news/symposia/flyway_2011/workshop.html)).

In the sections below short summaries of the conclusions are presented.

### 2.1 Day 1: Enhancing international cooperation and the conservation of migratory Wadden Sea birds within the East-Atlantic Flyway.

**Jan Blew:** The status of Wadden Sea birds, results of the trilateral monitoring project (JMMB/BioConsult SH).

Despite great conservation concern a substantial proportion of the Wadden Sea species is in decline. The international Wadden Sea monitoring programme should be continued and analyses in particular further developed. Monitoring should 'look' beyond the Wadden Sea as Wadden Sea populations are part of the East Atlantic Flyway. It is important to provide good access to results to be able to fulfil legal obligations in this respect. Good bird data and birds itself are key issues for management and the protection of sites.

**Theunis Piersma:** Wadden Sea birds within the flyway, the importance of the chain of sites and the ecological interconnection (NIOZ/University Groningen)

The Wadden Sea is a globally connected ecosystem and research from the different parts of the flyway and from other flyways are needed for the conservation and management of birds depending on this system. The different sites are interconnected. For instance there is a relation between departure weight of Bar-tailed Godwits (from the Wadden Sea) and breeding results at the Arctic and the feeding situation in the Wadden Sea and the Banc d'Arguin and the number of Knots depending on them. The complex Meta-ecosystem connections require long term and in-depth research to determine causes behind population trends of many species.

**George Eshiamwata:** Biodiversity conservation, livelihoods, wetland services and local communities (Birdlife International; African Regional Office).

Promote the concept of sustainable use and involve local communities in developing programmes and/or site management plans. Integrated approaches between biodiversity conservation and local livelihoods are needed. Intensify training of staff and try to arrange for allocated budgets from countries itself as matching funds. The monitoring of birds can be an important instrument to raise awareness. For instance more colonial breeding waterbirds should be included in the monitoring work (including fish populations as well). However birds alone are mostly not the exclusive driving force for wetland conservation and we need to realise that other goals are important as well.

**Bert Lenten:** Improving international policy and governance within the East Atlantic Flyway (AEWA secretariat).

Besides the overall policy framework for the African-Eurasian Region, AEWA e.g. presently focuses on facilitating concrete activities in Africa through the African Initiative and/or at regional level being Northern Africa, through the WetCap Programme, such as capacity building, monitoring and providing small grants for conservation projects. Recruiting new Parties and providing capacity building on AEWA implementation to existing Parties along the African Eurasian Flyways is an important recommendation. This together with developing Training of Trainers activities using the Flyway Tool Kit; development of SSAP's and further developing the (African) IWC.

**Ibrahima Thiam:** Improving management and wise use of West-African wetlands (Wetlands International).

Enhancing the development of site management plans for important sites is a good tool. Support existing partnerships and networks. Several programs are already in place carrying out work on management and sustainable use. More training of staff is required to achieve better management, also in relation to monitoring. To achieve sustainability, mechanisms should be put in place to support programmes for a longer period of time. Matching funds from the countries involved are also important in this respect.

**Tim Dodman:** Building capacity for migratory waterbird conservation along the western seaboard of Africa (Consultant)

For effective capacity building along the African part of the EAF there is a strong need for a long term institutionalised capacity building programme which strengthen relevant organizations on improving knowledge, practical experience and awareness. This programme should reach all relevant target groups from policy makers to community leaders and NGO's. More attention for a possible role for universities and other institutions like wildlife schools is needed as well. Wide dissemination of training materials and other resources is important.



**Ævar Petersen:** Improving management and wise use of the Arctic and Monitoring of Arctic Biodiversity (CAFF Secretariat)

Both the Netherlands and Germany are observers to the Arctic Council and CAFF and could suggest cooperative issues. Pay more attention to the connectivity of the Wadden Sea and the Arctic region. Prepare a report on the status and trends of Arctic migratory species and their relevance for the whole flyway. Compile an overview of present monitoring activities on Arctic waders

**Florian Keil:** Improving public awareness for migratory birds within the East Atlantic Flyway (AEWA secretariat.)

There is a need for an international flyway communication workshop to more efficiently coordinate awareness activities, bringing together all main actors involved in flyway activities along the EAF. One should build on previous experiences (also in terms of communication) made in the context of other flyway-scale activities, such as in the context of the UNEP-GEF Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) Project and the International Wadden Sea School (IWSS). In terms of communication materials, it would be helpful to prepare new flyway posters given the great interests in the previous ones (most of them out of stock). It could also be worthwhile to consider a common EAF Exhibition with full emphasis on connectivity along the whole flyway. One should also use World Migratory Bird Day and other awareness-raising campaigns as a tool for annual coordinated activities at important sites and in different countries along the EAF. Joint awareness-raising activities between individual sites, training institutions and countries along the flyway could also be considered in this context.

**Paul Schmidt:** Examples and lessons learned from international cooperation in the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the America's (Dep. Dir. USFWS).

On the scale of the flyway you do need strong leadership and goals. At the same time migratory birds conservation should be based on sound biological knowledge, landscape oriented (connectivity), partnerships and delivering the full spectrum of bird conservation.

The ten major lessons learned from almost 50 years of flyway conservation in the America's are:

- strong leadership (critical !);
- geographical based partnerships;
- birds connect people;
- regional implementation needs strong planning;
- matching funds needed as unilateral funding does not work;
- there is more than just key sites;
- life cycle knowledge is needed (critical);
- focus on limited number of species (30-40);
- funding should not be political motivated;
- provide a balance between research and other needs

At the end of each day (after presentations and discussion sessions) Paul Schmidt reflected on all presentations based on his long-term experience with migratory birds conservation, management and research in Northern America (his reflections for both days are added in full as Annex 3).



## 2.2 Day 2: What data and knowledge do we need for conservation and management of migratory Wadden Sea birds on flyway level.

The scope is on defining priorities and gaps in our ability of detecting unfavourable conservation developments and the causes behind these.

As a motto for this day we could use a formulation of Theunis Piersma and Tony Fox: "Too often we make the best use of information available. We should strive to identify what information is needed to ensure future assessments are based on best possible evidence, not best available."

**Tony Fox:** The use of data and knowledge about bird numbers and population demography for the conservation and management of migratory waterbirds (NERI)

Flyway level assessment of changes in abundance is essential to assess the effectiveness of conservation and management. Additional data on demographic rates (reproduction and survival) is needed to underpin the causes of changes. Data on immigration or emigration are helpful but more difficult to obtain. There should be more attention to the effects of hunting on population sizes. Much can be achieved if citizen science (counters are almost all volunteers!) is well organised but on the basis of good professional leadership to get the maximum out of it.

**Mikhail Soloviev:** Monitoring bird numbers and demographic parameters in the Russian Arctic: possibilities and problems (Moscow State University)

The low density of breeding Arctic birds, e.g. waders, makes it difficult to obtain good population data over a large geographical area. Alternative ways of data collection are needed and the Arctic Birds Breeding Conditions Survey (ABBCS, <http://www.arcticbirds.net>) is one of the best available tools and should be continued together with further in depth analyses. Extreme high transport costs in the Arctic reduces monitoring considerably; for the same reason ecological studies have been limited, although very important to monitor for instance climate change and other impacts on bird populations in the Arctic. It is recommended that existing long term Arctic monitoring programmes, such as the one on Taimyr, be continued as long as possible. There is a need to link existing ABBCS data to data collected outside the Arctic to study possible discrepancies and if so the reasons why.

**Antonio Aurojo:** Monitoring bird numbers and collecting data on site threats in coastal West Africa: possibilities and problems (Fiba/National Parc Banc d'Arguin).

The Banc d'Arguin is an essential area in the East Atlantic Flyway and monitoring should continue in a more systematic way over the whole area; which is not an easy task. This should go together with in depth ecological studies to be able to understand changes because of socio-economic impacts and other threats. There is for instance a measurable relation between chick condition in breeding terns and the increase of seawater surface temperature. The area figures in many larger programmes such as PRCM and RAMPAO and the group of Marine Protected Areas in West Africa. The area is relative

well off in resources due to much attention from donor countries and specifically through FIBA. Lessons learned and best practices need to be implemented to other key sites along the West Africa sea-board.

**Imad Cherkaoui:** Monitoring bird numbers and collecting data on site threats in NW-Africa (WetCap regional coordinator)

Overview of what has been done on waterbirds and wetlands conservation (only international important areas) in Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco. There are many smaller wetlands, also along the coast, which makes up an important 'staging site' in total. There is a promising increase in national capacity for monitoring, research and wetlands management, but differences per country. New update wetland inventories and their threats are needed due to an increase of human interventions. Increase monitoring of waterbirds outside the wintering period and increase capacity of wetlands managers. Strengthen the Europe-North African cooperation on monitoring, research and management.

**Michael Exo:** Studies to understand the decline in migratory waterbirds using the German Wadden Sea (Institut für Vogelforschung).

About 40% of the Wadden Sea birds in the Lower Saxony region are declining. This research project is developed to look in more detail into (ecological) factors that may cause the decline. There is an emphasis on studies (using modern geo-locators and satellite techniques) to analyse migration routes that means connectivity between the Wadden Sea and Arctic breeding sites as well as African wintering areas for a few selected species, Grey Plover and Bar-tailed Godwit. In a first step more detailed studies will be carried out in the breeding areas which are the less known parts of the flyway. Also for these studies the present monitoring of Wadden Sea birds is to be maintained as the minimum, but preferable be extended to other parameters like benthic stock and others. Needs and possibilities will be investigated in another project (WaLTER).

**Piet van der Hout, Jeroen Reneerkers & Theunis Piersma:** The value of detailed knowledge about demographic parameters in interaction with environmental factors to understand causes behind changes in numbers (NIOZ/RUG)

A presentation of the recently started METAWAD 1 programme; a five year in depth study on ecological demographics of a few selected Wadden Sea birds: Sanderling, Red Knot, Bar-tailed Godwit, Spoonbill and Brent Goose. Such detailed data are needed to understand the background of measured population trends and changes in numbers and distribution. A flyway approach is essential which needs also marking and ringing in the wintering areas with afterwards a maximum effort for re-sightings and monitoring. Citizens science could help in such a project.

**Szabolcs Nagy:** The needed international cooperation to assess flyway trends for migratory waterbirds in the East-Atlantic flyway (Wetlands International).

The IWC is the best available data set on international waterbird monitoring in spite of some limitations regarding geographical coverage of remote areas (parts of Africa, Middle East, Arctic). Feedback has been laid down to some extent but there is a number of actions ongoing to reinvigorate the IWC as the main international data set for reference on waterbird population trends and distribution. International coordination of IWC needs to be improved and basic data and data analyses should become available within a shorter time span. More is needed on trend analyses. Strong need to increase monitoring along the whole African coast, including the larger sites in North- West- and South-West Africa. There is also a need to increase monitoring of colonial breeding birds in the African coastal region.

**Bruno Ens & Hans Schekkerman** : Possibilities and gaps in providing a regular health check of flyway populations of migratory birds important in the Wadden Sea context: the need for international cooperation (SOVON).

There are 55 important flyway populations in the Wadden Sea context and part of them are declining. Causes are often difficult to determine but demographic information and modeling studies can help to determine underlying causes. There are various types of model studies available but basic monitoring data (birds and other ecosystem parameters) are always essential as well. This, together with studies of marked birds giving information on reproduction and survival. Some field studies are suitable for citizen science (counting, observing marked birds). For the remote breeding areas e.g. the Arctic, more use of remote census could be extremely helpful in predicting possible breeding success. Among the species now involved in integrated population monitoring, species depending on large shellfish (Oystercatcher, Eider) and pelagic fish (terns) are largely lacking.



### 3 Results of the discussion groups

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Part of the afternoons was used for discussion groups on the basis of six themes. For each of the groups general and more specific discussion questions were formulated; the full reports of the groups, which are brought together in Annex 4 and are not repeated here.

Some observations from the discussion groups:

**Policy discussion group:** discussion circled around what exactly the WHC meant with 'strengthening flyway cooperation. It was seen as a very broad issue and there is a need to narrow it down to e.g. the East Atlantic Flyway only. No agreement was reached on what the focus of activities should be: species, sites, training, awareness raising or monitoring. There is a need for a clear coordination of 'a Wadden Sea' programme emerging from the WHC request. Which organisation should do that?

**Capacity building group:** there is a strong consensus that we do need an integrated capacity and training programme for the whole flyway for the long term. That should take into account what is already ongoing and the programmes soon to start which all contain training and capacity building modules. Various elements can be build in into a long term programme such as twinning between the larger sides, Training of trainers workshops, involvement of universities and existing regional centres and wildlife schools; combination of monitoring and training etc. It should all aim at developing capable local staff, at all levels, in all countries within the EAF.

**Management discussion group:** this group used some time to discuss missing activities, which included: the urgent need for monitoring and management plans, in particularly in the Arctic and the African coastline. Building more partnerships would help achieving the aims of monitoring the whole flyway and the management on site level, this can for instance be achieved through twinning. Collect more information about direct threats to migratory birds and sites in Africa and the way sites are being used in a sustainable way by local communities is very important.

**Monitoring bird numbers discussion group:** much attention was paid to the structural lack of resources for even the most essential international coordination; let alone analyses of available data. There is no need for a different organisational set-up of IWC. There is a need for an obligation that all count and monitoring data, also from Africa should be made available in the IWC database. Wetlands International does need support to sustain this urgently needed international facilitation and coordination of waterbird monitoring. Looking for more permanent partnerships outside Europe could be helpful. More frequent counts in essential areas is recommended for the purpose of site related management questions. The Arctic is the 'forgotten country' in systematic monitoring.

**Vital rates discussion group:** demographic data collection is a costly and time consuming research type. Thus it can only been done with a number of carefully selected species. Again such activities should be internationally coordinated (which is something else than decided!). There is a strong need to

have citizen science activity in African countries, but that needs a strong and long-term capacity and training effort.

**Causal research discussion group:** this type of research comes in when population monitoring and trend analyses do not indicate to a certain cause. As with other groups, there was a discussion, which Wadden Sea species are important and should be subject of such research. Probably not only declining species. A selection, (different life histories, different long-and short distance migration, different feeding behaviour), should be made, as resources are not sufficient to study all. Monitoring with marked populations remain essential to collect basic data. This together with demographic information on survival and immigration/emigration in relation to habitat quality.



Participants of the flyway workshop Wilhelmshaven, March 2011.

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

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Clearly any set of recommendations and conclusions proposed to be implemented, is later to be bound to available resources such as finances, staff and policy/diplomatic priorities of the countries involved. That however should not beforehand be a limitation in the recommendations of this workshop. The Advisory Report (and its small Addendum) as prepared for the Dutch PRW, provides a comprehensive overview of all what is ongoing and possible within the EAF and provides a first ranking into short,- middle,-and long term priorities (Boere 2010). The workshop presentations and discussions have confirmed these priorities to a large extent and can be summarized as follows:

1. ***Develop a vision on the interpretation and implementation of the WHC request.***

This should be developed by the Netherlands and Germany and accepted by the Tri-lateral Wadden Sea cooperation, how to understand the WHC request and how to translate this request in a policy with clear targets. The development of such a vision does not need much time and should not withhold the start of a number of priority actions already. In Annex 5 the authors of this report provide their view on the interpretation of the WHC request and priorities for implementation.

2. ***Arrange a clear leadership for and coordination of the implementation of the WHC request.***

After that goals for the implementation of the WHC request are set, it is essential that leadership will be shown in stimulating, facilitating and coordinating the implementation and the many needed actions (fundraising and other financing models, project and programme formulation, public awareness, etc.). Given the specific tasks assigned by the WHC to the Wadden Sea countries involved, its recommended that the CWSS takes the role on coordination of the implementation of the WHC request. That should be done in close cooperation with the three Wadden Sea countries, in close cooperation with the new WOW Partnership and in close cooperation with specialist organisations and partners along the flyway. The leading and coordination 'body' should also at regular intervals organise workshops of a 'Wilhelmshaven' character (thus small and informal) to discuss progress, present results, develop new initiatives and exchange information.

3. ***Recruiting more AEWA parties along the EAF and support AEWA implementation.***

Support the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat in recruiting AEWA Parties in order to have, as a minimum aspect of strengthening international cooperation, all coastal countries together within a legally binding structure. After that it will help in implementing the action plan of AEWA and further flyway initiatives.



4. ***Develop an integrated Training and Capacity Building Programme based on the flyway approach.***

The urgent need for an increase of these activities along the flyway, often to be combined with management and research activities and projects, was mentioned in almost every presentation and in detail outlined in the presentation by Tim Dodman. There is some capacity building ongoing in various projects and programmes in place or in the pipeline; including twinning projects and proposals. However overall coordination of activities is lacking and there is no clear flyway-level policy on priorities along the EAF to bring a consistent message to the target groups. It is therefore recommended that, with high priority, a comprehensive Training and Capacity building programme is developed for at least a period of three years which takes the whole EAF into account. There are capable organisations and consultants able to develop such a programme in a relatively short time; they also know the right people to be targeted for such training activities. This is due especially to extensive training analyses already conducted under the WOW project and in preparation for the new MAVA flyways project. Above all, there are excellent materials available as developed under the WOW programme. One of the priorities for training is to raise capacity to increase monitoring effort in West Africa as well as further south along the EAF.

5. ***Improve site management and wise use focussing on working with local communities.***

This needs to be achieved by capacity building and training programmes as well. This training programme would link to flyway-level training (above) but provide specific support to clearly defined initiatives to build capacity at key sites, especially in collaboration with local communities. There are useful lessons to learn from sites such as the Banc d' Arguin, and much to gain from exchanging initiatives (by twinning for instance). The PRM network provides a suitable platform for such training in West Africa. Projects such as the new MAVA flyways project (led by BirdLife- and Wetlands International) would contribute, also activities of the Ramsar Convention. Allocation of resources would need to be carefully prioritised, as involvement in management of sites can be costly and long-lasting.

6. ***Develop an integrated Monitoring Programme.***

If one urgent action came out of the workshop then it is the need for long term monitoring both in a coordinated framework along the whole flyway and besides current programmes with extra attention for the Arctic and West Africa. In this respect there is a need to strengthen the IWC in particular. Efforts are needed to institutionalise the IWC and link it with the capacity building and training programme. Develop a program (which includes capacity building and training) to allow once per three years the simultaneous counting of at least all important sites within West Africa plus coastal areas further south. This should be followed by counts of a selection of sub sites in the intermediate years. It is also necessary to strengthen breeding bird monitoring (both in the Arctic and further south for instance for colonial birds); this and the IWC are the most important international references for assessing conservation status. Monitoring data are the basis for many other policy related actions: site and species conservation, research, sustainable use etc. It is a good way to involve communities and local conservation groups and organisations. The development of an integrated monitoring programme

(including vital rates besides monitoring of bird numbers) for the whole EAF is a top priority. It is recommended that a small group of experts and organisations directly involved in monitoring, prepares such a programme. Some preparatory work has already been done with the overview document about ongoing monitoring activities in the EAF (van Roomen *et al.* 2011), as presented to the workshop.

**7. *Develop further in depth-research for gaps in knowledge.***

Research is needed to explain the reasons behind for instance trends in populations and declining food resources along the flyway. Some major research projects, of direct relevance for Wadden Sea birds have recently started, apart from what has been done and is ongoing. The two recently started programmes by The Netherlands and Germany (as presented at the workshop) for long distance migrants, depending on the connectivity between sites far apart, are good examples. At present comparable research into species breeding in the Wadden Sea and depending on large shellfish (Eider and Oystercatcher) or fish (Terns and Cormorant) are high priorities as well.



Participants of the workshop.

## 5 References

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## **Annex 1 Terms of Reference Workshop**

Migratory birds connects World Heritage site Wadden Sea with North and South:

Organizing a workshop to discuss and decide on enhancing conservation and management of Wadden Sea birds by international cooperation in the whole flyway.

### Background

The Wadden Sea is used as staging, moulting and wintering area by more than 10 million water birds on their way from their breeding grounds in Russia, Canada and Scandinavia to their wintering areas in Western Europe and Africa. Within the African-Eurasian migration system this combination of breeding, staging and wintering areas is known as the East Atlantic Flyway. Within flyways migratory waterbirds are completely dependent on a critical network of sites and habitats. For an effective conservation and management of migratory waterbirds using the Wadden Sea, increased international cooperation is essential.

On June 26, 2009 the World Heritage Committee (WHC) inscribed the Wadden Sea on the World Heritage List. The WHC, by taking into account the important international role of the Wadden Sea, “requests the States Parties of Germany and the Netherlands to strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways, which play a significant role in conserving migratory species along these flyways.”

As a follow up of the decision of the World Heritage Committee the Wadden Sea Ministerial Conference at Sylt agreed to engage in a close cooperation with the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) to promote and strengthen cooperation on management and research within the African Eurasian Flyways

with relevant state parties as requested by the World Heritage Committee and establish cooperation for the protection and management of migratory birds relying on the Wadden Sea.

As part of the Dutch Wadden Sea nature recovery programme “Towards a Rich Wadden Sea”, one of the first needs identified under the theme of International connectivity is to organize a planning and coordination workshop with relevant partners along the flyway, especially focussing on the international organisation and coordination of conservation assessment and research work

Taking into account above, a joint meeting of AEWA, BMU, LNV/Rich Wadden Sea and CWSS in Bonn on September 28, 2010 decided that such an international workshop should be organised fulfilling the aims and needs resulting from both the request of the WHC and the aims of the Dutch “Towards a Rich Wadden Sea” plan. It was decided that the workshop should be organised by CWSS in consultation with SOVON.

### Objectives

The main objective of the workshop is to provide specific guidance for priorities in international cooperation enhancing conservation and proper management of migratory waterbirds connecting the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway.

Within the workshop two main parts are distinguished. At the first part a broad overview of the issues and priorities around international cooperation and conservation of migratory birds in relation to the Wadden Sea will be provided covering: policy and governance, management and wise use, monitoring and research, training and public awareness. At the second part, a specific elaboration of the international cooperation around data collection for conservation assessment will be covered. The scope of that part is focussed on: data collection and analyses for the assessment of flyway population size and trend, data collection and analyses for the assessment of vital rates (reproduction and survival) and the needed projects, coordination, cooperation and training for this.

#### Specific objectives of the workshop are:

Identify priority species, sites and countries for international cooperation in relation to the conservation and management of Wadden Sea migratory waterbird species within the flyway

Identify, on the basis of existing initiatives, what is needed on improved cooperation in the field of management and training

Identify the need and possibilities to enhance international cooperation on good governance of the whole flyway

Identify data needs for the assessment of status and trends of migratory bird populations at flyway level, in the context of current and future conservation management;

Identify on-going data collection activities, including current gaps, and identify and assess the need and conditions for additional data collection and/or coordination to enable proper assessment of status and trends of waterbird populations important in the Wadden Sea context.

Discuss the allocation of tasks and roles to various parties and possibilities for improved cooperation between all partners implementing the WHC request.

#### Outline Program

The workshop is scheduled as a two-day workshop where the following topics should be addressed:

Day 1 Broad overview of themes and priorities around international cooperation and the conservation of migratory birds in relation to the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway.

Day 2 Specific elaboration of projects and priorities around international cooperation in the conservation assessment of migratory birds in relation to the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway

#### Output

Broad overview of possibilities and priorities in international cooperation enhancing conservation and management around migratory waterbirds visiting the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway with a concrete allocation of tasks to partners involved.

Blueprint for enhanced cooperation and data collection for conservation assessment around migratory waterbirds visiting the Wadden Sea within the East Atlantic Flyway with a concrete allocation of tasks to partners involved.

#### Input

To be identified well in advance of the workshop.

### Participants

The meeting should not exceed 25-30 participants. Participants are experts having an overview of management, policy, monitoring and research needs for migratory waterbirds and international cooperation along the whole flyway, including;

AEWA, Wetlands International, Birdlife International, Arctic experts, African experts, Global Flyway Network (GFN), experts on Wadden Sea birds, experts from other European countries sharing large populations of migratory waterbirds within the flyway etc.

Representatives of the organizers and funders: BMU, EL&I (former LNV), PRW, National Nature Agency Denmark, CWSS and SOVON

### Place & Date

Place: The venue of the meeting should be in the Wadden Sea region, but because of several expected international guests, not too far from an international airport. The preferred date is at the end of February, beginning of March 2011.



Participants of the flyway workshop Wilhelmshaven, March 2011.

## Annex 2 Programme of the Workshop

Program Flyway Workshop  
The Wadden Sea – Strengthening Management and Research along the  
African Eurasian Flyway  
Wilhelmshaven, Germany, March 22-23, 2011

**Day 1:** Enhancing international cooperation and the conservation of migratory  
Wadden Sea birds within the East-Atlantic Flyway.

- 09.00-09.20 Arrival and registration of participants
- 09.20-09.45 Start and introduction
- Welcome by Jens Enemark, Common Wadden Sea Secretariat.
  - Welcome by Peter Südbeck, National Park Administration Lower Saxony.
  - Welcome by Franz Bairlein, Institute for Avian Research "Vogelwarte Helgoland".
  - Start and aims of the workshop by Gerard Boere (chair of the workshop)
- 09.45-10.10 The status of Wadden Sea birds, results of the trilateral monitoring project by Jan Blew, JMMB/BioConsult SH.
- 10.10-10.35 Wadden Sea birds within the flyway, the importance of the chain of sites and the ecological interconnection by Theunis Piersma, NIOZ/University Groningen.
- 10.35-11.00 Biodiversity conservation, livelihoods, wetland services and local communities by George Eshiamwata, Birdlife International.
- 11.00-11.30 Coffee
- 11.30-11.55 Improving international policy and governance within the East Atlantic Flyway by Bert Lenten, AEWA secretariat.
- 11.55-12.20 Improving management and wise use of West-African wetlands by Ibrahima Thiam from Wetlands International.
- 12.20-13.20 Lunch
- 13.20-13.55 Building capacity for migratory waterbird conservation along the western seaboard of Africa by Tim Dodman.
- 13.55-14.20 Improving management and wise use of Arctic wetlands by Ævar Petersen from CAFF Secretariat.
- 14.20-14.45 Improving public awareness for migratory birds within the East Atlantic Flyway by Florian Keil, AEWA secretariat.
- 14.45-15.15 Examples and lessons learned from international cooperation in the conservation of migratory waterbirds and their habitats in the America's by Paul Schmidt from USFWS.
- 15.15-15.45 Tea
- 15.45-17.00 Discussion and drafting conclusions

**Day 2:** What data and knowledge do we need for conservation and management of migratory Wadden Sea birds on flyway level. The scope is on defining priorities, possibilities and gaps in the detection of unfavourable conservation developments and the causes behind these.

- 09.30-09.35 Start, introduction and opening by Gerard Boere.
- 09.35-10.00 The use of data and knowledge about bird numbers and population demography for the conservation and management of migratory waterbirds by Tony Fox from NERI.
- 10.00-10.25 Monitoring bird numbers and demographic parameters in the Russian Arctic: possibilities and problems by Michail Soloviev from University of Moskow.
- 10.25-10.50 Monitoring bird numbers and collecting data on site threats in coastal West Africa: possibilities and problems by Antonio Araujo from de National Parc Banc d'Arguin.
- 10.50-11.15 Coffee
- 11.15-11.40 Monitoring bird numbers and collecting data on site threats in NW-Africa by Imad Cherkaoui, WetCap regional coordinator.
- 11.40-12.05 Studies to understand the decline in migratory waterbirds using the German Wadden Sea by Michael Exo from Institut für Vogelforschung.
- 12.05-12.30 The value of detailed knowledge about demographic parameters in interaction with environmental factors to understand causes behind changes in numbers by Piet van der Hout, NIOZ/RUG.
- 12.30-13.30 Lunch
- 13.30-13.55 The needed international cooperation to assess flyway trends for migratory waterbirds in the East-Atlantic flyway by Szabolcs Nagy from Wetlands International.
- 13.55-14.20 Possibilities and gaps in providing a regular health check of flyway populations of migratory birds important in the Wadden Sea context: the need for international cooperation by Bruno Ens & Hans Schekkerman, SOVON.
- 14.20-14.40 Tea
- 14.40-16.30 Discussion and drafting conclusions



## **Annex 3 Reflections from Paul Schmidt, Dep. Director USFWS**

### **Trilateral Cooperation on the Protection of the Wadden Sea**

#### **The Wadden Sea Strengthening Management and Research along the African Eurasian Flyway**

##### Reflections from Day 1 – March 22, 2011

It is important to be clear-minded and explicit about what the goals of this work are. What do the participants, and perhaps more important, what does the World Heritage Committee expect from this work. In other words, it is important to have a very clear vision of what a strengthened management and research program along the African Eurasian Flyway would be.

There are very respected and knowledgeable participants at this workshop, but there are many different ideas and scales of actions that might satisfy the expectations. While I am not an expert in this flyway, I have observed many perspectives in this workshop day. This is a huge and daunting task given the disparate levels of awareness, activities, engagement, purpose, need, and capacity along the flyway.

A first step or recommendation would be to have leadership or policy makers from the flyway clearly and succinctly articulate a vision for what the outcomes of this “strengthening” would look like. Once a vision is announced, work should begin to network the governments, non-governments, and universities together under this consensus vision.

Additional ideas that seem to have value would be to:

1. Develop a short list (10-20) focal species from the list of “typical” species of the Wadden Sea. These focal species should represent a suite of species that have similar niche’ in the habitat and can represent a number of species.
2. Establish desired flyway population goals for the focal species
3. Identify research on limiting factors associated with the lifecycles (breeding, migrating and wintering).
4. Some good suggestions were made on twinning of sites and exchanging of people between sites to build awareness of flyway wide issues
5. Prioritize the steps needed for building capacity in accordance with Tim Dodman’s presentation.
6. Expect the AEWA to be responsible for the overall coordination of an integrated monitoring program for the flyway.
7. Build an outreach and education program that is focused on what behavior change is desired in the public, if any.

It would seem that the Flyway leadership should spend more energy identifying and doing the “right” things as opposed to focusing too much on doing things “right”. Begin to think more strategically moving away from “random acts of conservation” to more purposeful actions focused on desired and measurable outcomes.

## Reflections from Day 2 – March 23

This flyway has a wonderful opportunity to build a more robust network of technical actions including monitoring and research. The presentations were excellent and represented significant expertise among the participants. I have little experience in this flyway, but offer observations based upon today's discussions.

All monitoring should be driven by management questions that are purposeful. In other words, consider what level of populations would be needed to trigger management actions and then determine what level of precision is needed for making this decision.

I offer 6 recommendations or ideas to consider:

1. Determine what data would be needed to determine a listing of species.
2. What data are necessary to trigger a species being determined to not be in "favourable conservation status".
3. Be determined to develop a comprehensive monitoring program for harvested species in the flyway that includes population, habitat, and harvest surveys.
4. What data are needed and how often to detect habitat changes at these critical and vulnerable sites.
5. What are the key limiting factors to the focal species
6. Build citizen support through citizen science considering worldwide models that are available with the expressed purpose of public engagement.

It appears that many of the participants are calling for an comprehensive and integrated management plan. I recommend a workshop be held with the expressed and sole purpose of developing such a plan beginning with an inventory of what is going on in the flyway that would be held by AEWA as the repository for this information and metadata. Proceed with identifying the future desired state and then the gaps that must be filled in priority order.

A short list of focal species should be developed (see remarks from Day 1). It appears there is a good start to this with such species as grey plover, bar-tailed godwit, and white-fronted goose.

Population goals are very important. What do the partners want to see as a desired state for population of the focal species. This will allow each geographic area to be responsible for a determined portion of the population goal.

For research, it would appear there is great opportunity to employ newly developed remote sensing technology to be more efficient in the monitoring. A high priority for the research should be a focus on climate change as many of these species and habitats appear to be quite vulnerable to climate change. It would be quite useful to determine vital rates for a few key focal species capitalizing on the work and interest of universities and institutes within the flyway.

## **Annex 4 Reports of the six discussion groups**

### **Policy discussion group report**

**Chair:** Manon Tentij

**Reporter:** Florian Keil

General impression of the discussion:

The overall character of the discussion was not very focused due to lack of clarity on the vision and a clear understanding of what the WHC “Flyway cooperation” reference actually means. I think a little more time allocated to the discussion would probably have led to more concrete outputs, especially as the discussion on the “coordination” issue came up towards the end of the discussion & then did not have the time to fully develop. However, a few key issues did emerge from the discussions in the policy group, these were:

Main points from the group:

- Need for clarity about extent & range of the East Atlantic Flyway – (General consensus was that it extended all the way to South Africa)
- Importance of monitoring was emphasized – need for better, more integrated monitoring & information across the whole EAF – as a basis for policy (Good monitoring as basis for policy decisions) Agreement on the fact that more sustainable funding for monitoring across the EAF is a priority.
- Discussion on where the focus/priorities should be: What should the criteria for selecting projects/activities be? Sites, Species/Populations, or Threats? Should the focus be on just WHC sites along the EAF or sites of relative importance for Wadden Sea Species/Populations, i.e. the critical sites for the most threatened or most representative Wadden Sea species/populations? The group was not conclusive on this and it was basically left open.
- Discussion on the Coordination for EAF Wadden Sea Programme work: One Organization, one leading coordinator for the work? How to manage the work? The WOW Partnership was seen as a good basis – and the proposal was made to possibly (temporarily) expand it to include CWSS Secretariat and potentially other key actors in EAF. Both Bert and Jens were in agreement on this, which was probably the most important outcome of this brief discussion group.

### **Training & public awareness discussion group report**

**Chair:** Jacques Trouvilliez

**Reporter:** Tim Dodman

Discussion

Training and public awareness are not goals on their own, but tools to solve certain issues. We should deal with some generic issues that catalyse activities, rather than attempting to solve awareness / training ‘problems’ in individual countries, given that the needs across the flyway are diverse. Problems should be closely linked to the livelihoods situation. Training needs to be adapted to local situation, e.g. through use and local adaptation of the Flyway Training Kit.

Twinning: There is great potential for renewed impetus of twinning, or 'tripling,' with active exchange between the Wadden Sea, the Banc d'Arguin and the Bijagós Archipelago, as the three main sites along the East Atlantic Flyway for migratory waders. As a long-term goal, these 'big 3' should ideally be at the same level of management.

We can envisage a capacity building programme with a pyramid approach of effort:

- a. Specific twinning programme
- b. Broader training involving other important sites
- c. Radiation to other organisations etc

In Mauritania we need a communication programme related to waterbirds and the sites they use. Ornithological tourism is an important opportunity for income generation, which can help to convince fishermen that birds have value. (Birds are widely conceived as pests / fish eaters). There is certainly an opportunity to promote (ornithological) ecotourism along the flyway.

For a flyway level capacity-building programme, we need a consortium approach, but this also needs coordination. Need to identify focal points / stations interested to be involved. Activities such as ecotourism could be promoted. Direct benefit is important for local engagement. There is a need for capable local staff in each country. Some existing programmes can already be used. There is potential for exchange students through universities.

It is important to provide training in broader areas, such as problem solving skills etc. It's essential to identify the 'right' people for capacity building, e.g. those who are motivated and might be expected to put their new skills to good use.

We need to foresee a community where programmes such as waterbird counts are discussed. There needs to be something at stake. Increasing the frequency of counts in Africa could help in building capacity for this work. In the Wadden Sea, we cannot rely entirely on volunteers. In West Africa protected area staff need to be involved.

Specific guidance for Capacity building and public awareness  
Guiding principles:

- A. It's essential to engage committed people
  - B. Long-term approach is obligatory
1. Establish a long-term capacity building programme along the East Atlantic Flyway comprising:
    - a. A coordinated programme: essential to maintain momentum & networks
    - b. Special focus on the 3 most important mudflats of the flyway (Wadden Sea, PNBA, Bijagós). Potential to also engage the Inner Niger Delta as a key inland site.
    - c. Use of a trickle down effect to engage other sites / countries
    - d. Close engagement of national centres along the flywayIdentify funds for different parts of the programme through prioritisation and noting the interests of different partners.

2. Strengthen organisations (government, NGO and local organisations)  
Institutional capacity building should result in a number of strong capable focal organisations along the flyway.
3. Establish a comprehensive training programme focused on priority African countries reaching:
  - policy makers (regional & national level, e.g. PRCM, Abidjan Convention, ministries)
  - protected area personnel of key sites; (use and adapt existing training resources)
  - researchers / biologists; (this should include some PhD level research)
  - community leaders & volunteers (especially at key sites along the flyway)
4. Training of Trainers (using the Flyway Training Kit)  
Need a network of competent trainers & communicators along the flyway.
5. Exchange along the flyway, connecting key sites  
Well-planned two-or-three-way exchange programmes provide sound platforms for building capacity and networks through equal partnership. This is already going on to some extent (e.g. NIOZ-Natuurmonumenten-PNBA) and should be encouraged by the CWSS.
6. Wide dissemination of training materials & resources, especially in Africa.  
The most effective mechanisms need to be identified, but funds should be set aside for this.
7. Regional / national centres fully engaged  
There must be greater involvement of regional and national training and research centres in flyway conservation, especially in western Africa. Such organisations (e.g. Centre for African Wetlands, APLORI, Ecole de Faune de Garoua, University of Cape Town) can play an important role in regional capacity building.
8. Build public awareness on the value of birds  
Different methods are required in different regions. In Africa, more emphasis is needed on the value of birds for ecotourism and their role in ecosystem functioning.
9. Diffusion of appropriate awareness materials and liaison with African performing artists  
Across the flyway a wide range of awareness-raising techniques can be employed.

No organisation can fulfil all these actions alone, but there is good scope for prioritisation according to identified organisational goals. It is important to maintain a regional overview of capacity building gaps and needs in order to direct fund-raising efforts in a coordinated way.

## Management discussion group report

**Chair:** Ævar Petersen

**Reporter:** Ibrahim Thiam

Question	Answers
Missing Activities/ Needs (including scale up of existing activities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monitoring breeding conditions in Arctic + wintering in Africa: (need for integrated monitoring for this flyway)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>o Partnerships (Wadden Sea, Arctic, West Africa) + financial mechanism</li></ul></li><li>• Leaving conditions of population: (quality of habitats in the flyway)</li><li>• Monitoring demographics in Africa</li><li>• Threats to migratory species in Africa</li><li>• Continuous information about wintering population in Africa}</li><li>• Identification of problems and implementations of solutions in selected countries in West Africa</li><li>• Increasing effectiveness of protective measures</li></ul>
Coordination larger programmes	AEWA - coordination flyway cooperation, WoW partnership. Caff in the arctic, CWSS for Wadden Sea importance (taking into account the non Wadden Sea species at sites as well)
Information Exchange	Better info on use & sustainable of sites

## Monitoring discussion group report

**Chair:** Antonio Araujo

**Reporter:** Szabolcs Nagy

### *Should Wadden Sea funds go into the Arctic or other regions?*

In general the answer is yes. West Africa or Arctic in alternative does not seem reasonable. A good program should include Arctic, and West Africa. Some less important sites should be also included to avoid buffer effect. Not to focus on areas beyond West Africa seems an option because most of the WS birds do not go further south than West Africa, but... Namibia and southern Africa have very good conditions and already operational schemes.

Before deciding more discussion needs to be encouraged. A species approach is important. The final decision should be taken depending on the key species identified.

### *How to organize monitoring in the arctic?*

Long term intensive monitoring on key areas with data integration schemes should be encouraged. A species approach is also important. The final decision should be taken depending on the key areas and species. Coordinating all research activities in the arctic is important (short-term university teams, bird counters, ringers, etc.) but we all agree that it is difficult to coordinate studies depending on private funding initiatives.

*Carry on support to ABBCS?*

Yes, this is a very worth while data gathering initiative for the Arctic combining information on many different sites which will otherwise disappear. The needed 15-20.000 euro on yearly basis seems god value for money.

*Is monitoring presently well coordinated along the East Atlantic Flyway?*

NO. Lack of money is the big issue. Data collected is not always made available.

*Do we need other organizational arrangements?*

No; funds should be made available to the already existing coordination schemes. Coordination is very important to promote exchange of information and further encourage field work. There is lack of information available and difficulties to access the available information. Dissemination of monitoring results is not effective. Governments in some countries in Africa need official encouragement to make monitoring information available and send it to a central coordinating body. Wetlands International is already doing the job but needs financial support. The final responsibility concerning the Wadden Sea is somehow to Germany and the Netherlands. A common framework promoting collaboration is important.

*How to create a long-term stable monitoring program in West and Southern Africa?*

Establishing partnerships and conventions with local initiatives, programs, networks and organizations is an absolutely key issue. Identification of local coordinators in each key country/area is also very important. To reinforce the involvement of local communities and civil society and to raise public awareness and interest on bird issues should be strongly encouraged.

### **Vital rate discussion group report**

**Chair:** Tony Fox

**Reporter:** Bruno Ens

Ideally, we would aspire to having demographic monitoring of all flyway populations but this is impossible due to many constraints, necessitating prioritisation of species. Assessment of annual breeding success and mortality is most necessary for species for which we lack good population estimates: code 3 for available trends in Annex C of overview report (van Roomen *et al.* 2011), although for several of these, monitoring of vital rates is in place, e.g. Lesser Black-backed Gulls by Kees Camphuysen and others To obtain best results, focus on a few selected species with tight coordination, developing models to analyse heterogeneous data.

Colour ringing is essential to obtain good estimates of survival and dispersal (metal ringing recovery data are not effective). While it is difficult to train volunteers to read rings, some species better suited than others (e.g. Sanderling has proven ideal).

Determining age ratios of many waterbirds in the field is challenging, one solution would be to use Citizen Science approaches: e.g. encouraging folk to take many digital pictures of flocks and/or develop a website to which to upload them as a repository of age ratio data. This approach needs pilot projects needed to develop sound methodologies (Robinson *et al.* 2005).

Flyway programmes offer possibilities to get people in Africa interested; only a few dedicated people needed. Training of local people could be incorporated into larger programmes. There is likely large potential in key areas, e.g. Morocco and Ghana coastal lagoons (e.g. Centre for African Wetlands)

### Reference List

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van Roomen, M, Schekkerman, H, Delany, S, van Winden, E, Flink, S, Langendoen, T, Nagy, S. 2011. Overview of monitoring work on numbers, reproduction and survival of waterbird populations important in the Wadden Sea and the East Atlantic Flyway. SOVON Information report 2011/02:1-64.

### **Causal research discussion group report**

**Chair:** Hans-Ulrich Rossner

**Reporter:** Piet van den Hout

Causal research comes in when population trends as such no longer suffice to act as a guideline for monitoring the fates of populations. The endeavour of identifying causes of population change should be preceded by the question "What species in the Wadden Sea are we responsible for?" One of the basic to be addressed should be: "which are the limiting factors driving population dynamics across the life cycle of a species (or subspecies for that matter)? These questions require a flyway-approach. We need a timely identification of causes for population change (a decline in adverse habitat conditions, or an increase after habitat restoration measures). The question, however, how we study populations in order to get sufficient 'early warnings', depends on aspects such as the life-history of the species (e.g. longevity), and the feasibility of studying populations.

Counts are often inadequate. Either because reliable population estimates cannot be attained by counts alone or because a population trend as such doesn't tell us about the underlying causes of population change, including the state of the habitat.

Therefore, keeping track of the fate of populations generally requires studying individual successes (in terms of survival and recruitment) in view of their habitat use (foraging successes). Obviously, this requires catching, colour-marking and subsequent resightings of individual birds, which should be tightly matched with monitoring of habitat quality. As such activities are quite labour-intensive, and time and money consuming, we should focus on a limited number of target species, which could be based on features such as their trophic role in the ecosystem, and their migration strategy.



## **Annex 5 Towards a vision and working programme: an interpretation of the WHC request**

Dr. Gerard C Boere & Marc van Roomen

The workshop generated a great number of very good thoughts and suggestions how to implement the World Heritage Committee request to:

**‘.....strengthen cooperation on management and research activities with States Parties on the African Eurasian Flyways, which play a significant role in conserving migratory species along these flyways.’**

It is on some aspects a broadly formulated request that in our opinion needs some further comments and interpretation. These could be the basis for a vision for the future and as recommended by the participants and in particular Paul Schmidt, (Annex 3) based on his long term experience with flyway management in the America's. On the other hand the request is concrete in the sense that it calls for an active, action oriented, approach.

To assist with further developing the vision and further actions resulting from such a vision, below some suggestions from our side how we believe the WHC request could be used and interpreted. Clearly the WHC request concerns the international Wadden Sea and its migratory birds and how these relates to the rest of the flyway(s). That is to some extent already a restriction if it comes to species and geographical range. The definitions and interpretations as described below have not really been discussed at the workshop but elaborated by the authors of this report on the basis of the presentations and many discussions with participants. They are meant to help with the development of a vision and related working plans and the implementation of these.

### **Strengthening:**

The word indicates that the WHC is aware of much of what is on-going but the WHC seems not convinced that it is all done in a coherent, well-coordinated way and that present activities are enough. There is a need for a clear vision and concrete actions and forward planning for the way the international Wadden Sea countries, through its migratory birds are involved in the whole flyway. The AEWA Strategy has many elements that is aiming at such international cooperation, but the WHC in this case assigns in our opinion a clear task to the Wadden Sea countries themselves. In a direct way for two countries through the WHC nomination and Denmark as the third country in an indirect way through the intensive tri-lateral Wadden Sea cooperation. The Common Wadden Sea Secretariat on a day to day basis implements the agreed tri-lateral activities and could do so in coordinating the WHC request. This proposed vision and related action plans for certain themes, should be developed in partnership and cooperation with the three Wadden Sea countries and other parties along the flyway. Strengthening could be applied to already on-going activities but also new initiatives are possible aiming at a closer cooperation within the flyway and not just a few countries.

### **Geographical scope:**

African Eurasian Flyways is a large geographical area which indeed contains several (sub) flyways (three as suggested on the basis of the frequently used flyway map from the International Wader Study Group). It ranges far east into

West Asia with for instance many birds migrating to East Africa with no relations to the Wadden Sea; although it can be the same species but a different flyway population. The requests however does not further specify flyways and even does not specify species (migratory species also include Passerine species!) but from the whole context of the WHC nomination it is clear that it speaks about the role of the Wadden Sea and its migratory birds, mainly waterbirds and waders in particularly, within these flyways.

In that sense the breeding areas in the Arctic region, from North East Canada to about the Lena delta in Siberia are a significant part of the geographical scope of the WHC request. Strengthening the contacts with those working in the Arctic region is well justified. Concerning flyways, the East Atlantic Flyway (EAF) is than the most important sub-flyway for Wadden Sea birds (in particularly the long distance migrants) and it ranges from Southern Europe along the west coast of whole Africa to the coastal areas of South Africa. The species most important in this context are the migratory waterbirds (see also van Roomen, 2011).

### **States Parties:**

As outlined in Boere (2010) this formulation is a bit of a geographical and diplomatic mixture of words. States is clear: all countries along the flyway; but the word Parties is generally used for those States that have signed up for an international treaty or convention. It is our interpretation that the WHC did not want itself to restrict to States that are presently a Party to e.g. AEWA only. Therefore the term 'State Parties' is interpreted as all States (countries) which are part of the EAF from the Arctic to South Africa. Still it is important to structure and strengthening the international cooperation also in a minimal institutional way by implementing an active accession policy for all coastal EAF countries to become a Party to AEWA. That at least creates an opportunity for all countries in the EAF to formally meet once per 3-4 years, strengthen their cooperation, increase the information exchange and eligibility for funding also for countries with smaller, but still important sites for migratory Wadden Sea birds. It also creates an opportunity, through AEWA membership, to be involved in many activities on a more frequent level than once per 3-4 years. Such as training workshops, meetings of the AEWA Technical Committee, species related workshops etc.

Being an AEWA Party also increases the possibilities to receive funding for conservation activities on coastal areas and migratory birds from both unilateral and multilateral sources.

### **Significant role:**

Playing 'a significant role' can be interpreted as being restricted to countries with the most important sites and numbers of waterbirds. In the EAF obvious names are than, besides the Wadden Sea countries, United Kingdom, France and Spain in particularly Mauritania with the Banc d' Arguin, coastal Senegal, Guinea-Bissau with the Bijagos Archipelago and Morocco in the South and Russia, Sweden, Finland and Norway in the North. Clearly these countries can and must play an important role in the international cooperation, but it is certainly not all and it is important to have all EAF countries involved in the needed conservation and management of all sites in the flyway. Becoming a Party to AEWA is one way (see above); involving representatives of all EAF countries in a long-term capacity building and training programme and a joint monitoring programme are other ways. All will stimulate international cooperation, the exchange of information and a sustained conservation and management of the flyway

### **Management and research activities:**

These are broad issues with many aspects that has been subject of several presentations during the workshop. Management and research (including monitoring) are quite different fields of interests although good research and monitoring is of course one of the pillars under solid and sustainable management. For both aspects you do need qualified and trained people throughout the EAF. The workshop made clear, also through the various presentations of African colleagues that there is an increase in capable and trained staff, but much has still to be done. Therefore training and capacity building in general to achieve a certain constant pool of capable people in all EAF countries must have a high priority. Training and capacity building can be tailored towards concrete management of sites or species as well as towards monitoring and research. Implementation of a longer term integrated programme on monitoring, needs raising of capacity and training and automatically increases international cooperation.

### **Priorities for workplans and further implementation:**

In the light of the above and aware of a number of activities on-going in the flyway, with an emphasis on West-Africa, we believe that the Wadden Sea countries could concentrate their activities on issues where extra input would make a difference and contributes to the conservation and good management of the whole flyway.

In our opinion these activities should concentrate on:

- Play an active and practical role, through the CWSS, in the coordination and information exchange on all projects developed and implemented following the WHC request; this in close contact with the AEWA Secretariat to avoid any duplication of activities.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive capacity and training programme for relevant people of all levels: policy, management, conservation and research, on the flyway approach. Such a program should take into account planned and on-going activities through some larger programmes.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive monitoring program for the whole flyway that would strengthen contacts and cooperation on all levels.



The authors Gerard Boere (l.) and Marc van Roomen

## Annex 6 List of participants

Participant list flyway workshop Wilhelmshaven March 22/23 2011 Status: 21-03-2011

	Name	First name	Organization	E-Mail	Country
1	Mr. Araujo	Antonio	National Parc Banc d' arguin	<a href="mailto:araujo@lafiba.org">araujo@lafiba.org</a>	Mauritania
2	Mr. Baerends	Bernard	Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs, Agriculture and Innovation	<a href="mailto:b.baerends@mininv.nl">b.baerends@mininv.nl</a>	The Netherlands
3	Mr. Bairlein	Franz	Institute of Avian Research	<a href="mailto:franz.bairlein@ifv-vogelwarte.de">franz.bairlein@ifv-vogelwarte.de</a>	Germany
4	Mr. Blew	Jan	BioConsult SH	<a href="mailto:j.blew@bioconsult-sh.de">j.blew@bioconsult-sh.de</a>	Germany
5	Mr. Boere	Gerard	Boere Conservation Consultancy	<a href="mailto:gboere@planet.nl">gboere@planet.nl</a>	The Netherlands
6	Mr. Cherkaoui	Imad	Tour du Vallat	<a href="mailto:imad.cherkaoui@gmail.com">imad.cherkaoui@gmail.com</a>	Morocco
7	Mr. Dodman	Tim	Dodman Consultancy	<a href="mailto:tim@timdodman.co.uk">tim@timdodman.co.uk</a>	United Kingdom
8	Mr. Enemark	Jens	Common Wadden Sea Secretariat	<a href="mailto:enemark@waddensea-secretariat.org">enemark@waddensea-secretariat.org</a>	Germany
9	Mr. Ens	Bruno	SOVON	<a href="mailto:bruno.ens@sovon.nl">bruno.ens@sovon.nl</a>	The Netherlands
10	Mr. Eshiamwata	George	Birdlife International	<a href="mailto:george.eshiamwata@birdlife.org">george.eshiamwata@birdlife.org</a>	Kenya
11	Mr. Eskildsen	Kai	Landesbetrieb für Küstenschutz, Nationalpark und Meeresschutz SH	<a href="mailto:Kai.Eskildsen@lkn.landsh.de">Kai.Eskildsen@lkn.landsh.de</a>	Germany
12	Mr. Exo	Michael	Institute of Avian Research	<a href="mailto:michael.exo@ifv-vogelwarte.de">michael.exo@ifv-vogelwarte.de</a>	Germany
13	Mr. Fox	Tony	NERI	<a href="mailto:tfo@dmu.dk">tfo@dmu.dk</a>	Denmark
14	Mr. Frikke	John	Miljøministeriet Naturstyrelsen Ribe	<a href="mailto:jofri@rib.mim.dk">jofri@rib.mim.dk</a>	Denmark
15	Mr. Günther	Klaus	Schutzstation Wattenmeer	<a href="mailto:k.guenther@schutzstation-wattenmeer.de">k.guenther@schutzstation-wattenmeer.de</a>	Germany
16	Mr. Hötter	Herman	Nabu	<a href="mailto:nabu-inst.hoetker@t-online.de">nabu-inst.hoetker@t-online.de</a>	Germany
17	Mr. Keil	Florian	AEWA	<a href="mailto:FKeil@unep.de">FKeil@unep.de</a>	Germany
18	Mr. Kleijn	David	Alterra	<a href="mailto:David.Kleijn@wur.nl">David.Kleijn@wur.nl</a>	The Netherlands
19	Mr. Laursen	Karsten	NERI	<a href="mailto:kl@dmmu.dk">kl@dmmu.dk</a>	Denmark
20	Mr. Lenten	Bert	AEWA	<a href="mailto:blenten@unep.de">blenten@unep.de</a>	Germany
21	Mr. Luerksen	Gerold	Common Wadden Sea Secretariat	<a href="mailto:luerksen@waddensea-secretariat.org">luerksen@waddensea-secretariat.org</a>	Germany
22	Mr. Nagy	Szabolcs	Wetlands International	<a href="mailto:Szabolcs.Nagy@wetlands.org">Szabolcs.Nagy@wetlands.org</a>	Hungary
23	Mr. Ould Yehdih	Mohamed Mah	National Parc Banc d'Arguin	<a href="mailto:mmouldyehdih@yahoo.fr">mmouldyehdih@yahoo.fr</a>	Mauritania
24	Ms. Pauly	Andrea	German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation	<a href="mailto:andrea.pauly@bmu.bund.de">andrea.pauly@bmu.bund.de</a>	Germany
25	Mr. Petersen	Ævar	CAFF Secretariat	<a href="mailto:aev@ni.is">aev@ni.is</a>	Iceland
26	Mr. Piersma	Theunis	NIOZ/RUG	<a href="mailto:Theunis.Piersma@nioz.nl">Theunis.Piersma@nioz.nl</a>	The Netherlands
30	Mr. Potel	Petra	Nationalparkverwaltung Nds. Wattenmeer	<a href="mailto:petra.potel@nlpy-wattenmeer.niedersachsen.de">petra.potel@nlpy-wattenmeer.niedersachsen.de</a>	Germany
27	Mr. Rösner	Hans-Ulrich	WWF	<a href="mailto:roesner@wwf.de">roesner@wwf.de</a>	Germany
28	Mr. Schmidt	Paul	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service USFWS	<a href="mailto:Paul.R.Schmidt@fws.gov">Paul.R.Schmidt@fws.gov</a>	USA
29	Mr. Soloviev	Mikhail	University of Moscow	<a href="mailto:mikhail-soloviev@yandex.ru">mikhail-soloviev@yandex.ru</a>	Russia
31	Ms. Tentij	Manon	Rijkse Waddenzee	<a href="mailto:manon.tentij@vogelbescherming.nl">manon.tentij@vogelbescherming.nl</a>	The Netherlands
32	Mr. Thiam	Ibrahima	Wetlands International	<a href="mailto:mtail@wetlands.sn">mtail@wetlands.sn</a>	Senegal
33	Mr. Trouvilliez	Jacques	OMPO	<a href="mailto:jacques.trouvilliez@developpement-durable.gouv.fr">jacques.trouvilliez@developpement-durable.gouv.fr</a>	France
34	Mr. van den Hout	Piet	NIOZ/RUG	<a href="mailto:piet.van.den.hout@nioz.nl">piet.van.den.hout@nioz.nl</a>	The Netherlands
35	Mr. van Roomen	Marc	SOVON	<a href="mailto:marc.vanroomen@sovon.nl">marc.vanroomen@sovon.nl</a>	The Netherlands

# The Wadden Sea World Heritage Site



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PROGRAMMA **NAAR EEN**  
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