



# CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES

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SECOND MEETING OF THE SIGNATORIES TO  
THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
CONCERNING CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR  
THE AQUATIC WARBLER (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)  
Biebrza National Park, Poland, 13-15 May 2010  
Agenda Item 8.3

## PRIORITY PROJECTS LIST

*(Prepared by BirdLife International and the CMS Secretariat)*

### Introduction

1. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Signatories are to implement the provisions of the Action Plan as a basis for conserving all populations of the species.
2. The purpose of the Priority Projects List is to coordinate international conservation and research activities in some areas of high conservation concern that still require urgent intervention. It focuses on issues of high international conservation importance, especially if they require international cooperation or funding support.. It is also expected to list only existing concrete project ideas on particular topics, hence is not intended to replace the list of priority actions included in the Species Action Plan. The list is designed to assist in focusing limited international, national and other funds for the most immediate conservation impact. It is also expected to provide the basis for targeted fundraising campaigns nationally and internationally.
3. The Priority Projects List is proposed for review and endorsement by the Second Meeting of the Signatory States to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler and is an update of the earlier version endorsed by the First Meeting of the Signatory States in 2006. The list includes also a few ongoing projects at least already partly funded, for which funding should maintained or complemented.
4. The activities presented in the list will implement in most cases “Essential” action points within the Action Plan. However, the activities have been further prioritised depending on the threats targeted and other conservation needs. A column on financial considerations is provided, which for most of the projects provides only a rough estimate of the resources needed, more precise figures should be calculated in the further development of the project concepts. Funding would be secured through funding applications prepared by lead countries and collaborators.



5. The primary responsibility for developing and implementing the listed projects will rest with the lead country governments, as well as each country's non-governmental community and its individual Aquatic Warbler experts. Relevant intergovernmental, international and national organisations would be invited to consider collaborating on the projects. The MoU's International Aquatic Warbler Conservation Officer (AWCO) would provide technical and other support on request to facilitate the project development and implementation processes. Signatory states are invited to consider contributing funds to selected priority projects.

6. The Priority Projects List will be updated at each meeting of signatory states, hence it is expected to cover an indicative period of 3 years.

**Action requested:**

The meeting is invited to:

- a) Review the Aquatic Warbler Priority Projects List and provide comments on how it could be improved; and
- b) Endorse the list and urge interested governmental and non-governmental organisations to consider financially supporting the projects listed.

**Priority Projects List to support implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding  
concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (*Acrocephalus paludicola*) and Action Plan**

*(as at 11 May 2010)*

No.	Project topic	Rationale	Range States Involved	Referring action in new SAP	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding status	Comments
<b>Breeding Range</b>								
1	<b>Belarus/Ukraine/Poland:</b> introducing sustainable large scale vegetation management system on key AW sites	The need for ongoing vegetation management is specified in management plans for key AW breeding sites as most prioritised conservation measures.	BY, UA, PL	1.5 2.6	Essential	1.8m €	Funding application submitted	Project on sustainable large scale vegetation management based on economic use of biomass arisings in Zvanets (Belarus), Upper bazin of Biebrza (Poland) and Birki (Ukraine) was submitted to EU Neighbourhood Programme PL-BY-UA by partnership of the BL partners of these countries and UNDP Belarus
2	<b>Poland:</b> introducing sustainable large scale vegetation management system on key AW sites in Eastern Poland	Slow successional overgrowth of breeding site is currently the biggest threat for AW in Poland	PL, with input from LT, UK, BY	1.5 2.6	Essential	3.6m €	Funding application submitted	Project on sustainable large scale vegetation management based on economic use of biomass arisings for all eastern Polish sites submitted to EU LIFE+ Programme by OTOP-BL Poland
3	<b>Lithuania/Latvia:</b> Implementation of conservation measures at key AW breeding sites in Curonian lagoon and Zuvintas biosphere reserve	All AW breeding sites in the Baltic region are threatened by abandonment or intensification	LT, LV with input from PL, D	1.5 2.6	Essential	2.1m €	Funding application submitted	EU-LIFE+-Project application submitted by Lithuanian NGO Baltic Env. Forum. Approach similar to Polish LIFE+ application
4	<b>Belarus/Russia/Ukraine:</b> Modelling potential AW breeding sites in Belarus, Ukraine and bordering regions of Russia, based on satellite image analysis	Identification of potential AW breeding sites by remote sensing can significantly decrease resources needed for ground verification	BY, UA, RU	4.3	High	10,000 €	Funding required	Due to methodological reasons, the search area in Russia will be restricted to the Kaliningrad region and the areas bordering Belarus and Ukraine
5	Inventory of all small breeding sites, following prior scoping	Small sites could be important for the recovery of the	BY, UA, RU	4.3	High	20,000 €	Funding required	Due to methodological reasons, the search area in Russia will be

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	through satellite image analysis	population and re-colonisation of restored sites. They have to be found and managed before they disappear.						restricted to the Kaliningrad region and the areas bordering Belarus and Ukraine
7	<b>Germany/Poland:</b> Implementation of conservation measures in Lower Oder Valley National Park according to the research results on key AW habitat requirements	German AW population is critically endangered	D	2.4 2.6	Essential	500,000 €	Pilot project ongoing, funding for main project needed	Follow up activity to the finalised research project (funded by DBU) started in 2009 as a piloting and development project (E+E-Vorhaben) funded by the German Federal government in order to develop and implement a sound grassland management system
8	Restoration of potential AW breeding sites for the critically endangered Pomeranian population	Crucial to restore the almost lost Pomeranian population along the German-Polish border sites identified within the Brandenburg and Poland Species Action Plans for AW that will be completed by the end of 2010	D, PL	3.1	High	unknown	Early project development	
<b>Migration</b>								
9	Inventory and threat analysis of stopover sites in Morocco	Detrimental developments at important migration stopovers of the AW pose a potentially serious threat. The situation in Morocco is least known, although the availability of suitable stopover sites in this country might be a special bottleneck	Morocco	4.4	high	10,000 €	Funding from outside Morocco required	Own national experts to implement search available
10	Synopsis and analysis of all existing AW ringing and recovery data	Analysis of ringing and recovery data will provide more information on migration pattern and strategy and is important to develop population models	All AW range states	4.1 4.2 4.6	High	5,000 €	Funding required, concept available	This action does not only require funding by range states, but also active support by state agencies responsible for ringing schemes. A first project concept is available.

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<b>Wintering Range</b>								
11	Investigating migration routes and wintering areas of Aquatic Warblers using the new technology of light-weight geolocators	Use of geolocators will allow to determine the exact migration routes, stopover sites during migration, moulting and wintering areas as well as possible changes of sites during the non-breeding period, e.g. to determine sites which require site specific conservation strategies and management plans.	All Signatories, especially UA (pilot project)	4.4 4.5 4.6	Essential	3x7,000 €	Funding for 2010 pilot project secured, further funding required for 3 additional years	First pilot project will start in 2010 with the Supoj population in central Ukraine; if successful, the method can be applied to the Pomeranian and eventually Lithuanian and Hungarian populations. Using the UA population as test site, will at the same time clarify the existence of an eastern flyway.
12	Ground check for location of more potential AW wintering sites in West Africa	It is crucial to identify other wintering sites apart from Djoudj in order to identify potential threats and bottlenecks. A satellite image analysis and new results from stable isotope research have resulted in a detailed search map that calls for on-the-ground verification	SEN, MRT, MLI	4.5	Essential	2x 20,000 €	Funding required	The immediate priority target area is the Inner Niger delta in Mali. Within the next 4 years, 2 major expeditions involving European and African experts foreseen.
13	Review of protection status and conservation situation of identified AW wintering sites in Africa	Detrimental developments at important wintering sites of the AW are one of the most serious threats to the AW	MRT, SEN, MLI	2.1 2.3	Essential	30,000 €	Funding for Djoudj review secured, required for other sites, when identified	Crucial to be done as soon as new wintering sites will be identified. For the known site in Djoudj, research project in operation since 2008 (funded by the German DBU and the Suisse MAVA foundation)
<b>General</b>								
14	Third Meeting of Signatories (2013 or 14)	Signatories meetings should be conducted regularly pursuant to MoU paragraph 3 to assess the implementation of the MoU and the Action Plan	All Signatories	5.1	High	20,000 €	Funding required	An option is to hold the Meeting in Lithuania during the LIFE+ Final Conference (2014), pending final approval of this project.

No.	Project topic	Rationale	Range States Involved	Referring action in new SAP	Priority	Est. Cost	Funding status	Comments
15	Securing ongoing coordination and support for the implementation of the AW MoU: Continue funding and staffing of BirdLife/CMS International Aquatic Warbler Conservation Officer (AWCO) position	AWCO provides assistance to the CMS Secretariat, BirdLife International and national conservation organisations to support implementation of the Aquatic Warbler MoU. Throughout the past 5 years, this arrangement has proven effective and cost-efficient.	All Signatories	5.1 5.2 5.3 5.4 5.5	High	20,000 USD/year	50% funding secured until March 2012, 50% still required	
16	Pilot work for the development of a population model for the whole world population and relevant subpopulations	A better understanding of population dynamics, survival rates and necessary reproduction would help the planning of conservation actions across the range	All	4.6	High	7,000 €	Funding required	This project is aimed to collect all available information needed to develop a population model and prepare a gap analysis and a work plan how to gather the missing information, if needed through fieldwork. Collection of the missing data and development of the model would be the next step
17	Research into movements during the breeding season within and between sites and the extent of exchange between different subpopulations using colour-ringing and genetic analysis.	Better understanding of these issues would help planning site restoration across the breeding range and to develop strategies for the conservation of the small marginal populations (Pomeranian, W-Siberian, Hungarian, Lithuanian), that are most threatened by immediate extinction.	All breeding countries	4.6	High	To be defined	Funding required	Results of 2 genetic studies are already available, but they are not sufficient to clarify all important questions in the necessary detail.