



**PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY  
GEF COUNCIL WORK PROGRAM SUBMISSION**

**AGENCY'S PROJECT ID:**

**COUNTRY:** Estonia, Gambia, Hungary, Lithuania, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, Tanzania, Turkey, Yemen

**PROJECT TITLE:** Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways.

**GEF AGENCY:** UNEP

**OTHER EXECUTING AGENCY(IES):** UNOPS

**DURATION:** 5

**GEF FOCAL AREA:** Biodiversity

**GEF OPERATIONAL PROGRAM:** Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Ecosystems.

**GEF STRATEGIC PRIORITY:** BD-1 – Catalyzing Sustainability of Protected Areas; BD-4 – Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues

**ESTIMATED STARTING DATE:** Q3 2004

**IA FEE:** US\$421,500

<b>FINANCING PLAN (US\$)</b>	
<b>GEF PROJECT/COMPONENT</b>	
Project	6.000.000
PDF A	
PDF B	350.000
PDF C	
<b><i>Sub-Total GEF</i></b>	<b>6.350.000</b>
<b><i>Co-FINANCING*</i></b>	
GEF Agency	
Others	6.765.045*
<b><i>Sub-Total Co-financing:</i></b>	<b>6.765.045</b>
<b><i>Total Project Financing:</i></b>	<b>13.115.045</b>
<b>FINANCING FOR ASSOCIATED ACTIVITIES IF ANY:</b>	
<b>LEVERAGED RESOURCES IF ANY:</b>	

\*Details provided under the Financial Modality and Cost Effectiveness section

**CONTRIBUTION TO KEY INDICATORS OF THE BUSINESS PLAN:** Demonstration projects in GEF project: 1.747.150 ha more effectively managed for conservation and 74.142 ha for sustainable use. Total area Ramsar designated sites within AEWA: 51.574.777 ha.

**Record of Endorsement on Behalf of Governments.**

Allan Gromov, GEF Focal Point, Ministry of Environment, Estonia, February, 7<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Momdodou A. Cham, GEF Operational Focal Point, National Environment Agency, Gambia, February 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Dr Tibor Farago Political Focal Point for GEF and Dr Laszlo Becker Operational Focal Point for GEF, Ministry of Environment and Water, Hungary, February, 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Mr Indre Venckunaite, Political Focal Point for GEF, Ministry of Environment, Lithuania, September, 12 2003

Mr El Hadrami Ould Baheine, GEF Focal Point, Ministered u Developpement Rural et de l'Environment, February, 28<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Adamou Salao, GEF Focal Point, Ministere des Finances et de l'Economie, Niger, March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Ayodele A. Olojede, GEF Operational Focal Point for Honourable Minister of the Environment, Nigeria, February 26, 2003.

Fatima Dia Toure, GEF Focal Point, Ministere de l'Environnement et de la Protection de la Nature, Senegal, February, 24<sup>th</sup>, 2003;

Dr Crispian Olver, GEF Focal Point, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa. March, 18<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

E.H.M Ekingo, Ag. Permanent Secretary, Vice President's Office, Tanzania, February, 27<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

Mr. Izamettin Eker, GEF Operational Focal point, Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Turkey, September 11, 2003.

Dr. Mohammed S. El-Mashjary, GEF Operational Focal Point, Ministry of Tourism and Environment, Yemen, February, 25<sup>th</sup>, 2003.

Approved on behalf of the *UNEP*. This proposal has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies and procedures and meets the standards of the GEF Project Review Criteria for work program inclusion

Mr. Ahmed Dioghlaf,  
IA/ExA Coordinator  
Date: 9/12/2003



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## **Project Summary**

### **a) Project rationale, objectives, outputs and activities.**

Migratory waterbirds are an important component of biodiversity that migrate annually along predictable flyway routes in the African/Eurasian landmass. The principal habitats that these species require to complete their life cycle are wetlands, many of which are being seriously degraded, representing a significant and continuing threat to the maintenance of sustainable migratory waterbird populations. A major barrier to effective wetland conservation is the lack of technical and management capacity throughout the region to manage sites and species at a flyway scale. Therefore the project's goal is to strengthen strategic capacity to plan and manage the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the critical sites along their flyways. Strategic and catalytic activities will be undertaken in three main areas; (i) improved access to flyway scale species and site information to assist in the protective designation, management and conservation of critically important wetlands; (ii) establishment of the basis for the enhancement of technical and decision making capacity; and (iii) the enhancement of communications capacity for flyway stakeholders at the technical and decision-making level. Key outputs that will result from the project are a site network tool to assist in the management of critically important wetlands, four sub-regionally focused training and awareness raising programmes, eleven demonstrations of site-based best practice management of wetlands and an exchange programme for flyway practitioners.

### **b) Key indicators, assumptions, and risks (from Logframe)**

See Annexes B and I for fuller details of these key indicators, risks and assumptions:

#### **Key indicators: Development Goal**

- Improvement in the average conservation status of migratory waterbirds in the project area, described in reports presented to the AEWA MoPs in 2005 and 2008.
- A 15% increase in the number of sites designated as Internationally Important wetlands under the Ramsar Convention using criteria based on waterbirds, as presented in reports to the Ramsar CoPs in 2005 and 2008.
- The number of countries ratifying AEWA increase from 40 to 70 by project end.

#### **Key indicators: Immediate Objective/Project Purpose**

- The area of protected areas in the flyway under improved management by project end, is increased by 1.747.150 ha, as established from the application of the WB/WWF Alliance framework for establishing management effectiveness.
- The numbers of government employees engaged in work related to the strategic implementation of the AEWA increases by 10 % in countries that have ratified the AEWA at the project's start, as established from a survey at the project start.
- The number of critical site management plans developed and implemented in sites of critical importance to migratory waterbirds increased by 15% by the end of the project, as established from Regional Reports to the Ramsar CoPs in 2005 and 2008.

#### **Risks:**

- Factors that will adversely affect waterbird populations and offset improvements achieved by the project; possible risks are natural catastrophe such as drought, epidemic disease in one or more populations of waterbirds.
- Factors that affect the ability of governments to contribute to the project either in terms of resource provision or cooperation and collaboration between them; possible risks are widespread political instability, economic downturn

**Assumptions:**

- Willingness to increase cooperation and collaboration between Range States in sub-regions and the flyway as a whole continues to exist throughout the project;
- Programmes contributing data and information to the development of the critical site management tool continue to be organised and managed in a way conducive to their use by the project;
- Range States are willing to continue to invest resources in the realisation of project activities and their sustainability post-project;
- Factors affecting the populations of migratory waterbirds remain similar throughout the project;

**2. Country Ownership**

**a) Country eligibility**

The requesting countries have all ratified the Convention on Biological Diversity on the following dates: Estonia: 27/07/94, Gambia: 10/06/94, Hungary: 24/02/94, Lithuania: 01/02/96, Mauritania: 16/08/96, Niger: 25/07/95, Nigeria: 29/08/94, Senegal 17/10/94, South Africa: 02/11/95, Tanzania: 08/03/96, Turkey: 14/02/97, Yemen: 21/02/96.

**b) Country driven-ness**

All of the requesting countries have given high priority to the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, including wetland habitats and migratory waterbirds as noted in their NBSAPS:

- Estonia - Biodiversity strategy and action plan, sections: education (2.1), agriculture (4.1), hunting (6.1), fishing (7.1), industry (10.4), tourism (12.1), nature conservation (13.1);
- Gambia - National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (1999), Strategy for Integrated Coastal and Marine Development (1996), Wildlife and Biodiversity Policy (1999);
- Hungary - National Environmental Programme (appendix H, point 1.3, 1.5 and 1.6);
- Lithuania - National Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS) and Action Plan (BCSAP), (BCS articles 1.1.2, 1.1.3; BCSAP articles 3.1.5, 3.1.7, 3.1.8);
- Mauritania - National Action Plan for Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (1996);
- Niger - National Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity of the National Environment Council for Sustainable Development of Niger;
- Nigeria - National Biodiversity Conservation Action Plan;

- Senegal - National Action Plan for the Environment, (1997); National Monograph on Biodiversity (1999), National Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Biodiversity (1999);
- Turkey – National Biodiversity Strategy (*draft*);
- Yemen – National Biodiversity Strategy (*draft submitted for cabinet approval*), section 5.1.4.3

South Africa and Tanzania do not yet have National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan documents. Precursor documents to these that refer to wetlands and migratory waterbirds are:

South Africa - National Conservation Priorities for South Africa, Compiled by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

Tanzania – National Study on Biodiversity (1998), sections 11.1a and 11.1b.

The AEWA and Ramsar Convention are the two Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements whose respective Actions Plans will be most significantly supported by the project. Ratification of these two agreements shows the strength of country-driven-ness; of the 117 States within the project area, currently 40 have ratified the AEWA (within 8 years) and 90 have ratified the Ramsar Convention (within 22 years).

### **3. Programme and Policy Conformity**

#### **a) Fit to GEF Operational Program and Strategic Priority**

The Programme is eligible for GEF assistance under Operational Programme (OP) 2 “Coastal, Marine and Freshwater Systems”. The Programme directly addresses the OP 2 Objective of the “...*conservation and sustainable use of the biological resources in freshwater ecosystems*” and will generate substantial global benefits.

The project coincides with the GEF Biodiversity Strategic Priorities in two main areas:

**I. Catalysing Sustainability of Protected Areas:** Capacity development for long-term sustainability in institutional, individual and systemic target areas.

**IV. Generation and Dissemination of Best Practices for Addressing Current and Emerging Biodiversity Issues:** Compilation and dissemination of best wetland management and waterbird conservation practice and the development of scientific and technical cooperation.

#### **b) Sustainability (including financial sustainability)**

**Financial Sustainability:** The GEF alternative invests funds both to achieve the specified outcomes and to establish a longer term sustainability for their post-project implementation. Targeted investments are made to initiate activities but also to stimulate the development of stakeholder engagement in their longer term funding and support. This will include both direct financial investment but also secondment of staff to coordinate and run activities post project. Funds are also invested to help stakeholders raise resources for longer term financial sustainability of training programmes and an exchange programme.

**Technical Sustainability:** Overall, the project builds capacity on existing entities and initiatives. Where additional capacity is needed the project invests in this but it is so designed that responsibility for post-project implementation of new initiatives will be passed to relevant and committed agencies either at the flyway or sub-regional scale. This will be achieved by continuing to engage stakeholders in the implementation of the project and by enhancing their capacity to carry out these roles.

### **c) Replicability**

Replicability will be facilitated through a number of different project activities:

- Establishment of the opportunity for capacity strengthening of wetland and migratory waterbird practitioners, by developing a transferable training Programme and adapting it to sub-regional needs.
- Implementing 11 demonstration projects to illustrate a wide range of possible issues and interventions, and serve as example or models for replication elsewhere. Embedding the sites and lessons learned into exchange programs training and awareness programmes will ensure replication.
- Development of a comprehensive site network planning and management tool at flyway scale that is consistent and compatible throughout.

### **d) Stakeholder involvement**

Broad-based and intensive stakeholder consultation and involvement in the design of this project has been a feature of its development. National level government and NGO stakeholders have been involved through outreach workshops (Central Asia / Caucasus, the Middle East), questionnaire consultations (training, sub-regional priorities), stakeholder workshops (all 11 demonstration sites). Regular discussions and meetings were held with the key Project Stakeholders (UNEP, Wetlands International, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, BirdLife International, Ramsar Convention Bureau) to assist and oversee project design via the Project Steering Committee and bilateral meetings.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) and sub-regional Training Boards will provide the main route for government, Multi-lateral Environment Agreement and NGO input and advice on the project. NGOs involved in other flyway initiatives, will be able to participate through communication and awareness mechanisms in Component 3 and through linkages established by the PCU. At the site scale, demonstration projects are overseen by local steering committees which will facilitate stakeholder involvement in addition to the agencies and subcontractors implementing the specific activities.

At the sub-regional level, stakeholders will be heavily involved in the design and execution of activities. They will be involved in activity planning workshops, revision of key outputs and the implementation of key activities. This will particularly be the case in the development of the critical site network and the design of training and awareness raising programmes. Responsibility for resource mobilisation to implement the both the training / awareness and exchange programmes will be shared with the project.

Communications activities such as a waterbird internet discussion group, enhanced AEWA website, exchange programme, best practice publication and regular project

newsletter will engage specific groups of practitioners and experts across the flyways. This will provide opportunities for stakeholders to become aware and involved in project activities. Materials and resources will be developed in English, French, Russian and Arabic (which are predominant in the project focal sub-regions) to assist this.

#### e) Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation plan for the project is presented in Annex I. Monitoring of progress in executing the components and activities will be undertaken in accordance with UNEP's internal guidelines for project monitoring and evaluation. Project progress overall will be monitored by the PSC which will provide UNOPS and UNEP with assessments of the progress of the project based on annual reports provided by the PCU. Impact Orientated Indicators presented in the Project Logframe and demonstration projects logframes will be used to measure technical progress against an agreed workplan developed at the project's inception.

#### 4. Financial Modality and Cost-Effectiveness

Name of co-financier	Classification	Type	Amount (US\$)	Status of discussion with counterparts and co-financiers
Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nuclear Safety and Nature Conservation, Germany	Government Agency	Cash contribution	1.114.405	Awaiting Letter of Commitment (LoC). Public statement of commitment made at CMS CoP7, 2002
UNEP/AEWA Secretariat	Multi-Lateral Environmental Agreement Secretariat	Cash contribution	1.044.456	Received LoC
		Committed in-kind support for Communications Officer	250.000	Received LoC
Demonstration projects	Mixture of government, private and NGO	Cash and Committed in-kind support	2.555.581	Received some LoCs. Awaiting others. Contributions confirmed with all demonstration projects in the last 2 months.
Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage, France	Government Agency	Committed in-kind support	302.394	Received LoC
Environmental Protection Agency, Sweden	Government Agency	Cash	30.090	Received LoC
Ramsar Convention Bureau	Multi-Lateral Environmental Agreement Secretariat	Committed in-kind support	21.000	Not yet received LoC.

Danish Ministry of Environment and Energy	Government Agency	Cash contribution	5.000	Monies received by Wetlands International
Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development, France	Government Agency	Cash contribution	89.152	Not yet received LoC. LoC being prepared.
BirdLife International, United Kingdom	NGO	Committed in-kind support	70.000	LoC being prepared.
European Topic Centre	Bilateral Agency	Committed in-kind support	66.864	LoC being prepared.
Wetlands International		Committed in-kind support	370.134	LoC being prepared.
		Cash grants	408.969	LoC being prepared
PDF B co-financing			437.000	
Total Co-financing			6.765.045	

Note: Many contributions have been committed as Euro and here have been converted to US\$. Exchange rates may cause exact US\$ contributions to vary during the project.

## 5. Institutional Coordination and Support

### a) Core commitments and Linkages

The project is strategically focused and links closely to a number of actions identified under the AEWA Implementation priorities for 2004-2007 and to the Ramsar Convention Strategic Plan 2003-2008. Through the project steering committee, linkage and coordination of project activities with the activities of these multi-lateral agreements will be ensured.

Furthermore there are a number of initiatives that take strategic and catalytic approaches that this project will link with. These include: the MEDWET Initiative; the annual RIZA organised, Netherlands based International Course on Wetland Restoration; the long-term studies of Colonial Waterbirds by La Station Biologique de la Tour du Valat; the Ramsar “Evian Initiative” that is addressing the need to transfer know-how between wetland managers; the Wetlands International training programme for wetlands and waterbirds; the BirdLife International Important Bird Area Programme; the Wetlands International Specialist Group Networks; the Wetlands International IWC, the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust “Monitoring biodiversity for site management planning in Eastern African wetlands” project, the EU Natura 2000 site network that is being expanded to include the newly acceding states; the EU EUROSITE initiative addressing exchange of information between protected areas in Europe.

UNEP’s role in the GEF is detailed in the “*Action Plan on Complementarity Between the Activities Undertaken by UNEP under the GEF and its Programme of Work (1999)*”. This project addresses the Action Plan strategic objective: “...*promoting multi-country cooperation directed to achieving global environmental benefits* “ by establishing international cooperation mechanisms and building capacity for the conservation of a network of globally important wetlands in Africa and Eurasia that are required for the survival of migratory waterbirds including a number of globally endangered species. The project also links to the strategic objective “...*relating national and regional priorities to global environmental objectives*” by building capacity for flyway conservation at national

and sub-regional levels and by directing resources towards project activities that will achieve global benefits (such as conservation of internationally important wetlands and threatened waterbird species).

The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, Ramsar Convention Bureau, international NGOs and related schemes and initiatives. The UNEP/AEWA Secretariat is providing 1.044.456 contribution in cash and 250.000 in-kind and has provided extensive support during the PDF B and will continue to do so during the full size project.

**b) Consultation, Coordination and Collaboration between IAs, and IAs and ExAs, if appropriate.**

A review of current best practice and communications across the project area during the PDF-B lead to a number of GEF initiatives (being implemented variously by UNDP, UNEP and WB) that could benefit from the increased strategic capacity that this project will generate (e.g. increased training and information access) being identified. These will be kept informed of the project activities and opportunities for involvement during its implementation by the PCU. In particular two flyway related projects were identified where stronger linkage will be necessary to ensure coordination of activities and appropriate development of synergies; the UNEP GEF “Development of a wetland site and flyway network conservation of the Siberian crane” and the UNDP/WB GEF “Protection of key bottleneck bird areas for soaring migratory birds in the eastern sector of the Africa-Eurasia flyway (Rift Valley and Red Sea flyways)”. Contact with the executing agencies for both of these projects will be continued throughout implementation of the full project.

**c) Project Implementation Arrangements**

The GEF project will be implemented by UNEP (Implementing Agency) and managed and administered by UNOPS (Executing Agency). Contracted organisations and consultants will carry out technical activities; Wetlands International will be the “Senior Lead Contractor” and BirdLife International the “Lead Contractor”.

**Project Steering Committee:** The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will comprise representatives of selected government agencies and representatives of the main project organisations involved in technical and administrative delivery of the project (Wetlands International, BirdLife International, AEWA, the Ramsar Convention, UNOPS and UNEP). The PSC’s role will be to guide and oversee the project’s technical progress and performance, coordinate the roles of the organisations they represent and ensure that their the project and their own organisations activities are coordinated.

**Project Coordination Unit:** The overall project will be technically coordinated by a small Project Coordination Unit (PCU) located in the offices of Wetlands International in Wageningen, The Netherlands. A Chief Technical Advisor and a Junior Operations Manager will be employed by UNOPS to run the Unit. The PCU will report to the PSC, Task manager in UNEP and Portfolio Manager in UNOPS.

**Sub-Regional Training Boards:** Sub-Regional Training Boards will guide and oversee the activities in each of the focal sub-regions relating to the development of sub-regional training and awareness programmes in the first two years. Government agencies will be

involved in each sub-region and will Chair each Board. Each Chair will also take part in the overall PSC, acting as a link between the two Committees. The Board's role will be to provide advice and guidance on Programme development in the sub-region and linkage with the activities of their respective organisations.

## Annex A: Incremental Cost Analysis

	Baseline, B	<u>Alternative,</u> <u>A</u>	Increment, A-B	
<b>Component 1: Scientific basis for conservation activities strengthened through development of a comprehensive, flyway scale, critical site network planning and management tool.</b>				
<i>Outcome 1.1. The network of critical sites is available as a tool for use by practitioners to underpin planning and management of and catalyse site level activity in, flyway conservation.</i>	\$5,095,485	\$6,694,188	Total Increment:	\$1,598,703
			GEF Contribution:	\$223,601
			Co-finance:	\$1,375,102
<i>Outcome 1.2. Primary data resources that underpin flyway conservation, planning and management activities enhanced to include all critically important sites in the AEWA region.</i>	\$14,571,000	\$15,164,066	Total increment:	\$593,066
			GEF Contribution:	\$33,000
			Co-finance:	\$560,066
<i>Outcome 1.3. Flyway data gathering and monitoring capacity strengthened to support the updating and maintenance of primary data resources that underpin conservation of the network of critical sites.</i>	\$290,000	\$951,445	Total increment:	\$661,445
			GEF Contribution:	\$168,093
			Co-finance:	\$493,352
<i>Outcome 1.4. Species and critical site knowledge base supports management and planning decision-making in flyway conservation.</i>	\$3,516,000	\$3,659,114	Total increment:	\$143,114
			GEF Contribution:	\$30,670
			Co-finance:	\$112,444
<b>Component 2 Establishing a basis for strengthening decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation.</b>				
<i>Outcome 2.1. Transferable model Training and Awareness Raising Programme framework produced for developing wetland and waterbird conservation capacity.</i>	\$600,000	\$769,265	Total increment:	\$169,265
			GEF Contribution:	\$87,826
			Co-finance:	\$81,439
<i>Outcome 2.2. Wetland and waterbird conservation Training and Awareness Raising Programmes produced ready for implementation in four sub-regions.</i>	\$2,200,000	\$3,104,096	Total increment:	\$904,096
			GEF Contribution:	\$432,580
			Co-finance:	\$471,516
<b>Component 3: Enhanced availability and exchange of information through improved communications capacity and resource provision.</b>				
<i>Outcome 3.1. Demonstrations of best practice management of migratory waterbirds and wetlands available across the flyway.</i>	\$1,226,875	\$6,898,731	Total increment:	\$5,671,856
			GEF Contribution:	\$3,032,534
			Co-finance:	\$2,639,322
<i>Outcome 3.2 Mechanisms for governments and ngos to communicate between themselves and with each other strengthened.</i>	\$3,402,417	\$3,561,347	Total increment:	\$158,930
			GEF Contribution:	\$21,393
			Co-finance:	\$137,537
<i>Outcome 3.3. Mechanisms of exchange between and within sub-regions for improved flyway-level migratory waterbird and wetland management established.</i>	\$3,277,723	\$3,521,163	Total increment:	\$243,440
			GEF Contribution:	\$27,309
			Co-finance:	\$216,131

	<b>Baseline, B</b>	<b><u>Alternative,</u></b> <b><u>A</u></b>	<b>Increment, A-B</b>	
<i>Outcome 3.4: Wise-use of migratory waterbirds and wetlands is better understood and implemented by governments in focal sub-regions.</i>	\$9,143,403	\$9,472,903	Total increment:	\$329,500
			GEF Contribution:	\$88,364
			Co-finance:	\$241,136
<b><u>Components Total</u></b>	\$43,092,902	\$53,566,321	Total increment:	\$10,473,415
			GEF Contribution:	\$4,145,370
			Co-finance:	\$6,328,045
<b><u>Project Coordination Unit Costs</u></b>	\$0	\$1,321,927	Total increment:	\$1,321,927
			GEF Contribution:	\$1,321,927
			Co-finance:	\$0
<b><u>Project Steering Committee Costs</u></b>	\$0	\$88,259	Total increment:	\$88,259
			GEF Contribution:	\$88,259
			Co-finance:	\$0
<b><u>PDF-B</u></b>	\$0	\$787,000	Total increment:	\$787,000
			GEF Contribution:	\$350,000
			Co-finance:	\$437,000
<b><u>OVERALL TOTAL</u></b>	<b>\$43,092,902</b>	<b>\$55,763,507</b>	<b>Total increment:</b>	<b>\$13,115,045</b>
			<b><u>GEF Contribution:</u></b>	<b><u>\$6,350,000</u></b>
			<b>Co-finance:</b>	<b>\$6,765,045</b>

## Annex B Project Logical Framework

<u>Intervention logic</u>	Indicators of performance	<u>Means of verification</u>	Risks and assumptions
<b>Development Objective</b>			
Conservation of globally significant migratory waterbirds and wetlands enhanced in the African – Eurasian flyways.	<p>1. Improvement in the average conservation status of migratory waterbirds in the project area, as established from comparison of the various trend categories in the Conservation Status Report.</p> <p>2. The numbers of sites designated using Ramsar Convention criteria 5, 6 (specific criteria based on waterbirds) as Internationally Important wetlands under the Ramsar Convention increases by 15%, with respect to the start of the project.</p> <p>3. The number of countries ratifying AEWA increase from 37 to 70 over the course of the project. Specific targets for the new States in the project focal sub-regions of the project are:</p> <p>Central Asia and Caucasus: 3;            Middle East: 4;            Western- and Central Africa: 7;            Eastern- and Southern Africa: 7.</p>	<p><u>1. Conservation Status Report for the AEWA region, as produced for AEWA MoP2 compared to the AEWA MoP 4 (expected to take place in 2008).</u></p> <p><b>2. Comparison of the numbers of Internationally Important Wetlands designated under the criteria specific to waterbirds in the 7<sup>th</sup> Directory of Wetlands of International Importance to those in the 9<sup>th</sup> Directory (expected for the Ramsar CoP10, 2008).</b></p> <p><b>3. Report of the Agreement depositary on the number of ratified States at the AEWA MoP4, scheduled for 2008.</b></p>	<p>Factors, out of control of the activities of the project do not negate positive the impacts of project activities, or interfere with the flyway and sub-regional scale project activities such as:</p> <p>? Political instability in sub-regions of the flyways;            ? Disease on an epidemic scale in one or more waterbird populations;            ? Natural catastrophe such as drought.</p>
<b>Immediate Objective</b>			
Strengthened strategic capacity to plan and manage the conservation of migratory waterbirds and the critical sites along their flyways.	<p>1. The numbers of government employees engaged in work related to the strategic implementation of the AEWA increases by 10 % in countries that have ratified the AEWA at the project's start.</p> <p>2. The numbers of individual stakeholders in States that have ratified the AEWA, that are actively engaged in the conservation of critically important sites for migratory waterbirds increases by the following amounts:</p> <p>– Managers in critical sites: 25%;</p>	<p><u>1. Questionnaire survey of the provincial and national level government agencies.</u></p> <p><u>2. Questionnaire survey of selected site-level stakeholders.</u></p> <p>3. Comparison of regional reports to the Ramsar Convention CoPs 8 and</p>	<p>Increase in number of officials working in species and site conservation in the AEWA region is not negated by strong (negative) changes in the financial situation of governments.</p>

Intervention logic	Indicators of performance	Means of verification	Risks and assumptions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Local (site and/or catchment scale) government decision makers: 20%;</li> <li>- Community leader decision makers: 15%.</li> </ul> <p>3. The number of critical site management plans developed and implemented in sites of critical importance to migratory waterbirds increased by 15% by the end of the project. This figure is presented as a best estimate. Additional information available at the project's inception will be considered together with the Project Steering Committee and a revised value established for the indicator.</p> <p>4. The area of protected areas in the flyway under improved management by project end, is increased by 1.747.150 ha, as established from the application of the WB/WWF Alliance framework for establishing management effectiveness.</p>	<p>10.</p> <p>4. Comparison of the management effectiveness score for demonstration projects at the start of the project with their score midway and at the end of the project.</p>	
<b>Outcomes</b>			
<b>Component 1: Scientific basis for conservation activities strengthened through development of a comprehensive, flyway scale, critical site network planning and management tool.</b>			
<p>Outcome 1.1. The network of critical sites is available as a tool for use by practitioners to underpin planning and management of and catalyse site level activity in, flyway conservation.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The critical site network for all species of migratory waterbirds contained in the AEWA Annexes is available to flyway planners and managers.</li> <li>2. The critical site network portal is accessed more than 15 times per day for information on species and sites.</li> <li>3. Flyway information derived from the site network tool used in the development of at least 10 site management plans for Ramsar sites of critical importance to migratory waterbirds.</li> <li>4. Flyway information used in the development of species action plans for at least 5 species.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>1. The tool can be accessed through the web-portal on the AEWA web-site; hard copy publication available to stakeholders without Internet access.</u></li> <li>2. Number of visitors/hits on the portal, using an inbuilt counter.</li> <li>3. Reference to the site network tool in the site management plan documents and direct enquiries to the agencies involved.</li> <li>4. Reference to the site network tool</li> </ol>	<p>No unforeseen insurmountable software problems arise in the development of the portal or in the linkage of the underlying databases.</p> <p>Access to the site network tool is not limited by access to the Internet in some sub-regions</p> <p>Capacity of stakeholder organisations to use this information is sufficiently developed.</p> <p>Database custodian data</p>

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators of performance</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>	<u>Risks and assumptions</u>
		in the Action Plan documents and/or direct enquiries to the agencies involved.	access policy and database software does not change in such a way as to make the tool unviable.
Outcome 1.2. Primary data resources that underpin flyway conservation, planning and management activities enhanced to include all critically important sites in the AEWA region.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data for at least 90% of the critically important sites in the AEWA area are available in the IWC and/or IBA database by the end of the project.</li> <li>2. Species data for critical sites are of a uniform standard and quality.</li> <li>3. The proportion of critical migratory waterbird sites for which 'Ramsar International Site Directory' standard material is collected exceeds 50%.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Reports detailing critically important sites; interrogation of the IWC and IBA databases.</u></li> <li>2. All species data accessible through the site network tool conform to the minimal standards for inclusion in the IWC database.</li> <li>3. Interrogation of IWC and IBA databases and comparison to guidelines.</li> </ol>	<p>Political instability in some regions does not prevent the identification and survey of critically important sites that are currently not yet recognised as such.</p> <p>Current levels of availability of counters are not negatively affected by external factors.</p> <p>Development of capacity in the region is sufficient to accommodate the work needed for the results to be achieved.</p>
Outcome 1.3. Flyway data gathering and monitoring capacity strengthened to support the updating and maintenance of primary data resources that underpin conservation of the network of critical sites.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Proportion of newly trained counters that are involved in the waterbird counts for IWC and IBA Programmes by the end of the project exceeds 75%.</li> <li>2. Proportion of coordinators that are active in both IBA and IWC which are submitting data jointly for both Programmes exceeds 50%.</li> <li>3. Proportion of newly recognised critically important sites that are included in one or both of the IWC/IBA Programme waterbird counts exceeds 75% by the end of the project.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Data contribution records for IWC and IBA; post training questionnaires.</u></li> <li>2. Data contribution records for IWC and IBA; post training questionnaires.</li> <li>3. IWC and IBA database site records.</li> </ol>	<p>Political instability does not inhibit training in some sub-regions/countries where it is most needed.</p> <p>There are no significant changes in data collection protocols for either IWC or IBA Programmes during the project.</p>
Outcome 1.4. Species and critical site knowledge base supports management and	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The site network tool includes a module providing site and species ecological information important for flyway planning and management.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>The site network tool is accessible through the AEWA website and the hard-copy</u></li> </ol>	<p>There are sufficient opportunities for submission of proposals.</p>

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators of performance</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>	<u>Risks and assumptions</u>
planning decision-making in flyway conservation.	2. By the end of the project, 10 proposals to fill information gaps have been submitted to external donors.	<u>report.</u> 2. Project proposals, letters acknowledging receipt of proposals; offers of funding.	
<b>Component 2 Establishing a basis for strengthening decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation.</b>			
Outcome 2.1. Transferable model Training and Awareness Raising Programme framework produced for developing wetland and waterbird conservation capacity.	1. Model Training and Awareness Programme fully available. 2. Model Training and Awareness raising Programme adopted as the basis for capacity development programmes in project focal sub-regions. 3. Model utilised by one other sub-region as the basis for development of a sub-regional training programme, either within or outside the project area.	1. Publication of the model framework. 2. Report of Sub-Regional Training and Awareness Raising Planning Workshop; Sub-Regional Training Board minutes. 3. Official notification of the intention to use the model.	Flyway-level stakeholders can come to an agreement over the structure and content of a model Sub-Regional Programme.
Outcome 2.2. Wetland and waterbird conservation Training and Awareness Raising Programmes produced ready for implementation in four sub-regions.	1. A Training and Awareness raising Programme is available in each of the four project focal regions: – Western and Central Africa; – Eastern and Southern Africa; – The Middle East; – Central Asia/ Caucasus States. 2. Sub-Regional Training Boards established in each focal region to oversee Programme implementation. 3. The training and awareness raising programmes are implemented in each sub-region within one year of their finalisation.	1. Publication of Programmes in the predominant languages of each of the four focal sub-regions. 2. Minutes of Sub-Regional Training Boards. 3. Minutes of Training Board meetings.	Sub-regional stakeholders can come to an agreement over the structure, content and implementation of a Sub-Regional Programme.  Sub-regional stakeholders are able to contribute and assist in resource mobilisation activities.
<b>Component 3: Enhanced availability and exchange of information through improved communications capacity and resource provision.</b>			
Outcome 3.1. Demonstrations of best practice management of migratory waterbirds and wetlands available across the flyway.	1. Reports on progress of the demonstration projects accessible to site managers and decision makers across the flyway at least once per year. 2. Lessons learned and results available to stakeholders across the flyway in written form.	1. Articles and reports in project and partner newsletters and websites. 2. Publication of a book summarising the lessons learned and results for all demonstration projects.	Political instability in countries where demonstration projects take place does not disrupt execution of the projects.

<u>Intervention logic</u>	<u>Indicators of performance</u>	<u>Means of verification</u>	<u>Risks and assumptions</u>
	<p>3. Flyway stakeholders benefit from first hand experience of the lessons learned via personal contact with staff and executing agencies of the demonstration projects.</p> <p>4. Note: For sit- specific logframe matrices focused on site intervention outcomes, see the individual demonstration project logframes in Annex G.</p>	<p>3. Reports of training and awareness raising meetings held at demonstration projects by other project activities (training courses, exchange programme activities).</p>	<p>Changes in political, legal or social organisation do not create barriers to successful demonstration project execution.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.2 Mechanisms for governments and NGOs to communicate between themselves and with each other strengthened.</p>	<p>1. Annual number of visitors to the AEWA website increases threefold by the end of the project.</p> <p>2. There are more than 200 subscribers to the email discussion group by the end of the project.</p> <p>3. By the final year of the project traffic on the email discussion group reaches an average one message per day.</p>	<p>1. Counter on the AEWA website.</p> <p>2. Webmaster records of subscribers.</p> <p>3. Webmaster records of traffic.</p>	<p>Access to the Internet continues to expand.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.3. Mechanisms of exchange between and within sub-regions for improved flyway-level migratory waterbird and wetland management established.</p>	<p>1. Existence of functioning and effective sub-regional and flyway networks in four flyway routes, with at least 50 members in each within 2 years of initiation.</p> <p>2. At least two site twinning arrangements/joint site action plans established in each flyway exchange network by the end of the project.</p> <p>3. Plan, including financial resource strategy for the continuation of the Programme finalised by the end of year 2.</p>	<p>1. Lists of members and sites held by network coordinator.</p> <p>2. Official documents recording the nature of twinning arrangements / joint action plans.</p> <p>3. Programme planning document submitted to the Project Steering Committee.</p>	<p>Participants will remain in positions in which they can follow up on exchange outputs.</p> <p>Part-time seconded staff will adequately service exchange networks.</p> <p>Flyway donors are willing to invest in the development of a flyway-wide exchange programme in the long-term.</p>
<p>Outcome 3.4: Wise-use of migratory waterbirds and wetlands is better understood and implemented by governments in focal sub-regions.</p>	<p>1. More than 75% of the States in the project focal sub-regions which are not yet Ramsar Convention contracting parties, ratify it by the end of the project.</p> <p>2. National wetland policies have been developed or initiated by at least 3 more States in each focal sub-region by the end of the project.</p> <p>3. Annual waterbird surveys take place in 90% of States in</p>	<p>1. Ramsar Convention Bureau's records of ratification.</p> <p>2. Publications outlining national wetland policies.</p> <p>3. Waterbird Census reports for western Palearctic and South-West Asia and the African regions of the</p>	<p>Sub-regional mentors are accepted by sub-regional Range States as representatives of the respective MEAs.</p>

<u>Intervention logic</u>	Indicators of performance	<u>Means of verification</u>	Risks and assumptions
	sub-regions by the end of the project.	IWC.	

Response to external reviews

## ANNEX C: STAP ROSTER TECHNICAL REVIEW<sup>1</sup>

**Project Title:** **Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways**  
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<sup>1</sup> Two STAP reviews were conducted of this project. A second STAP review was required when a Component was redesigned.

## A. GENERAL COMMENTS

### A.i Global priority in the area of biodiversity

The Full Project Proposal on *Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways* (further referred to as the Flyways Project, or simply ‘the Project’) targets flyway networks of the entire West Eurasian, Middle Eastern and African region, spanning a large part of the globe. The global importance of adequately safeguarding key sites in the flyways of this huge ‘project area’ is without question. Included in the African-Eurasian region are 873 designated Ramsar Sites (i.e. Wetlands of International Importance), and a further 2,669 sites identified as ‘shadow’ Ramsar Sites under BirdLife International’s IBA program. These sites and others in the project area support many important (and threatened) migratory bird species, including 235 species covered by the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (i.e. birds ecologically dependent on wetlands for at least part of their annual cycle, including many species of pelicans, storks, flamingos, ducks, waders, terns, gulls and geese).

The global significance to biodiversity of the 11 sites selected for demonstration projects is evident. Seven of the 11 sites are designated Ramsar Sites and an application for Ramsar Site designation has been made for a further two sites. All of these wetlands of international importance meet this criterion (among others) because of their significance in supporting waterbird diversity. Some sites are extremely important: Banc D’Arguin in Mauritania supports more than two million waders annually, Hadejia-Nguru in Nigeria annually supports almost half a million water birds, and Lake Burdur in Turkey supports 70% of the world population of white-headed duck *Oxyura leucocephala* and has endemic zooplankton and an endemic fish species *Aphanius burduricus*. The two remaining sites – Dar es Salaam Wetlands, Tanzania, and the Aden Wetlands, Yemen – meet the criterion of globally significant wetland as they (seasonally) support > 1% of the world population of various bird species. The Aden Wetlands are expected to be designated as one of the first Ramsar Sites of Yemen once it accedes to the Ramsar Convention (this has been approved by Yemeni Cabinet but has yet to be carried out).

### A.ii Cost-effectiveness in achieving focal area objective(s)

The Flyways Project is budgeted at US\$6.35 million – a significant amount, but one that is dwarfed by the size of the project area and the scope of what is to be achieved in the medium- to long-term. Significantly, the Project leverages a total of more than US\$20 million in co-financing, and in this sense the Project can be regarded as cost effective. Where possible, use is made of existing facilities and expanding or upgrading these where required – this is, for instance, the case with the various databases and with the sub-regional project centers. Also, as the focus is on increasing local awareness and capacities, creating regional capacities, providing and promoting examples, and on sustainability, the impact of the Project is maximized. During Project implementation the emphasis is also on leveraging further funds, for example, by (eventually) requesting fees for training programs.

In Component 1, the Project has secured significant co-funding for all outputs, except for 1.2, which focuses on the enhancement of primary data resources and includes surveying in areas that are data deficient. This is not unusual, as bilateral and national funds are rarely available for such activities. The bulk of the funds in Component 3 are intended for the demonstration projects. This appears to be well spent, as provision of concrete examples of wise use is what is lacking in many areas.

An area that requires elaboration in the Full Project Proposal are the costs for the PCU (US\$ 1.292 million) and for overheads (8% or US\$1.84 million). PCU costs are now entirely funded out of GEF funds - if it is for management of the full project this should be clarified.

Incremental costs. In table 1, less than 4% of the total costs for output 3.1 (demonstration projects) is indicated as being baseline, with the remaining 96% being identified as incremental. This should be elaborated more, to clarify that the GEF inputs are indeed not supplanting baseline activities.

### **A.iii Adequacy of project design**

The project design of the Flyways Project is generally adequate. The three project components are logical and present a coherent sequence: i) strengthening of the scientific basis for conservation; ii) capacity building for conservation, and iii) improved availability and exchange of information. Several aspects of project design that should be addressed during finalization of the Full Project Proposal are:

#### *Overall design:*

Language and communications. In a project of this magnitude and geographical coverage, improved communication is essential and may be pivotal to success. Indeed, component three is devoted to improved communications and resource provision. The difficulties posed by language barriers across this vast region are well addressed in the annex(es), but less so in the main document. This should therefore be elaborated.

Paragraph 2. The network of critically important sites mainly consists of wetland sites, but also some other habitats for certain species. As the Project focuses on the management and conservation of waterbirds and wetlands, the relative unimportance of non-wetland habitats in the flyways should be substantiated. <by adding a line or two in the main document>

Paragraphs 11-15: threats. Many of the wetlands in the project area are threatened by habitat change and/or destruction, often on a large scale (e.g. Lower Mesopotamian Wetland in Iraq). The 11 demonstration projects serve to illustrate a large number of best practices (Table G1). All of these concern a country-driven request to develop a demonstration project addressing a priority issue at an internationally important wetland for migratory waterbirds. They do not address all threats at a site. In certain cases this means that they are (intentionally) not (always) designed to address all the key threats faced by a given site. At four of the 11 demonstration sites, for example, the main threat to the area's integrity is external (i.e. Outside the system boundary). This issue - of

demonstration projects not addressing all key threats – was first discussed when the PDF-B was submitted and approved by the GEF for pipeline entry. UNEP made clear at the time of submission of the PDF-B the intention of the demonstration projects. The reviewer fully concurs with this approach, as the intention is to provide good examples over the entire flyway rather than remove root causes of decline.

Paragraphs 19-20 International strategic and policy context. With only 5 of the 12 requesting countries having joined AEWA, there should be significant emphasis on facilitating the accession process. This is provided to some extent (paragraph 69) by means of allowing key staff of sub-regional project centers to shadow key staff in the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, and having key MEA documents translated. It is also noted in the annexes. For sustainability this would seem essential, as AEWA accession and obligations may in the long-term be the main vehicle for fostering communications between individual countries and sub-regional centers, and for maintaining strategic cooperation between states. Clear targets are stated in the Logframe (p.B-3).

Paragraphs 24-27, Synergy with Wetlands and Migratory Waterbird Initiatives. In addition to strengthening the linkages with the Wetlands International and BirdLife International IWC and IBA programs and the EUROSITE program, the Project should link in with the EU's Natura 2000 network, which is being expanded to accession states such as Lithuania, Estonia and Hungary.

Paragraph 36-38 Databases. Who will develop and maintain the portal that facilitates a link between existing databases, and where will it physically be located? How will a manager living in an isolated area, with limited access to the www make use of facilities or be made aware that 'snapshot' versions are available on CD-ROM? Who will make CD-ROMs available after the life of the Project?

Paragraph 47: directories of wetlands to be developed. The link with ongoing/existing initiatives needs to be explained. A Directory of Wetlands of the Middle East already exists (Scott, D.A. (ed.) 1995. A Directory of Wetlands in the Middle East. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland and IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K. xvii+560pp, 13 maps.). Similarly, Central Asian wetlands are being described in a compilation of the "Asian Wetland Inventory" (AWI)- an ongoing project being carried out by Wetlands International (or has this been shelved?). AWI will include the Central Asian Republics of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. This should be harmonized with Annex-E, which describes existing directories, and mentions that wetland inventories will be compiled using the AWI approach.

Paragraph 56. A draft regionalized program is to be developed and distributed to sub-regional stakeholders who will further develop the program. Surely this will be a joint exercise (e.g. with sub-regional project centers)? Products should be locally embedded, but the Project should be ultimately responsible for capacity building, and therefore also for the quality of the outputs.

Paragraphs 61-62, examples of best practices. A link should be made with the Ramsar Handbooks (9 volumes), which are available in hardcopy, on CD-ROM and on the www and in three languages (English, French, Spanish). Several (at least 3) volumes deal specifically with 'wise use' principles, and provide numerous examples. Translation into Russian and Arabic might be highly useful for use in the sub-regions.

Paragraph 64. Apart from a Project newsletter, which concrete tools are being considered to foster international communications?

Paragraphs 65-67 – mechanisms of exchange between and within sub-regions. This focuses very literally on exchange of persons within and between sub-regions, but shouldn't this also include other mechanisms for exchange of information – forums for this may include seminars and workshops, for example.

Paragraph 69 access to wise use guidance and the MEAs; see 4, above. Should assistance perhaps also be provided to various stakeholders in the sub-regions in drafting proposals, so that lessons learnt from the demonstration projects can be replicated at other sites?

Paragraphs 70-74: risks. External risks focus on war (p71) and disasters (p.74), but may also include a range of external factors mentioned in 3 (above), including upstream construction of dams, watershed development/unsustainable land use in the watershed, and use of resources by persons from outside the system (e.g. illegal migrant fishers). Such external factors may jeopardize the success of the (demonstration) project. Another potential risk worth highlighting is that various co-funding (see A.ii, above) may not be available when required, or that various activities are undertaken at too early a stage, when inputs from the GEF-funded components are not yet provided. This may mean that results may deviate from what was originally intended. It should be noted that mechanisms have been put in place to counter this, so the actual risk is low.

Paragraph 73: availability of suitable staff. Included here should be that staff remain seconded throughout the life of the project (and beyond, to ensure sustainability), and are not transferred every other year.

Paragraphs 75-77 Sustainability. See 4 (AEWA accession) and 14 (continued secondment of staff) above. This section on sustainability may include the provision of assistance for other stakeholders in the various sub-regions in the drafting of proposals for replication of wise use demonstration projects at other locations (see 12).

Paragraph 81. Project Steering Committee. The PSC is to consist of representatives of the main organizations involved in technical and administrative delivery of the project: WI, BL-I, AEWA, Ramsar, UNOPS and UNEP. The paragraph goes on to state that 'representatives of selected governments will also be *involved*'. Does 'involved' mean that they will be included on the PSC? More direct involvement and balanced inclusion of the countries involved on the project is desirable. Why 'selected' governments and not representatives of all 12 requesting countries? Annex-I suggests 1 rep from each sub-region. Perhaps there are good reasons, e.g. budgetary constraints?

Paragraph 89 stakeholder involvement. This states that “The development of the Training and Awareness Raising Programs in each sub-region will also involve local organisations in a consultative role.” This seems to be inconsistent with paragraph 56, which states that “A draft regionalized program is to be developed and distributed to sub-regional stakeholders who will further develop the program.”

*Logframe (Annex B).*

Performance indicator 3 (B-3) – number of critical site management plans developed and implemented ... increased by 15%. What is the current number of plans?

Similarly, indicator 1 (B-4) .. data for 90% of the critically important sites in the AEWA area... How many critically important sites are there at present? Is this equal to the number of (shadow) Ramsar Sites and IBAs? Any idea of how many might be added following further assessments?

Risk and assumption under 1.1 (B-4) ...not limited by Internet access in some regions of the flyway. Isn't this very optimistic? Apart from major cities, large parts of Africa, for example, have poor access at present, and this is unlikely to improve significantly over the life of the Project.

Performance indicator 4 (B-7) expected participant numbers for the workshops... exceed 80% overall. Do you mean 'exceed 80 overall'?

Performance indicator 5 (B-7) evaluations ... with stakeholders .... indicate that their expectations ... have been exceeded. This may be too optimistic – suggest: .. expectations.... have at least been met, and preferably exceeded.

*Overall Annexes G: Demonstration Projects.*

Coherence between various demonstration projects needs to be clarified more, and elaborated in a general introduction that should be summarised in a paragraph in the main document.

*Annex G-2: Estonia.*

P.G-2.6. The Estonian “Nature 2000” network initiative. Do you mean the Estonian part of the EU’s Natura 2000 network initiative?

Paragraphs 6 & 7 (G-2.7): on the one hand you have reversion to reed affecting coastal meadows, on the other hand you have unsustainable harvesting of reed being identified as a threat. This seems inconsistent.

*Annex G-3: Hungary.*

There seems to be some inconsistency in the ‘economics’ side of the fish farm: paragraph 8 (G-3.23) states that some people have lost income due to extensification of the fish farming enterprise, while paragraph 9 states that the fish farm is ‘one of the most successful fish-farms from an economical point of view. Does this mean that the benefits

have been unevenly distributed? E.g. the ponds as a whole are profitable, but extensively managed ponds (by MME/BirdLife Hungary) are less profitable?

There is a risk that those that have lost most due to extensification are less likely to participate in the eco-tourism industry. The Project should (at an early stage) identify stakeholders that have been affected most by the ban on hunting and the extensification program, and ensure that they are involved in Activity 3.3 (G-3.28).

*Annex G-4: Lithuania.*

From the point of sustainability, who will operate and maintain the modern water regulation equipment to be installed by the project (paragraph 15, p. G-4.45)? and how will this be funded on a long-term basis?

*Annex G-5: Mauritania*

The project seeks to develop and implement an ornithological ecotourism strategy for the PNBA, but as is stated in paragraph 3 (G-5.57) the PNBA has already developed and printed a Strategy for Ecotourism Development, and the proposed project will build upon this following recommendations of a workshop held in 2001. What are the shortcomings of the existing Strategy?

(Minimal) Targets need to be established in terms of number of paying visitors and amount of income generated annually by the end of the project. The Project should consider providing seed money/soft loans to the Imraguen to facilitate local initiatives for establishing tourist facilities.

*Annex G-6: Niger*

According to the proposal (paragraph 21, G-6.74) local management structures are not well defined for natural resource management. Does this reflect a recent imbalance, for example, due to population increases or immigration? How will you limit further external pressures, e.g. immigration to the site once the project has lead to improved livelihoods? <funds and improved livelihoods may attract people from outside the area>

The Logframe (G-6.83) should identify a means of verification for improved management of the natural resources. At present, all indicators relate to establishing structures and enhancing capacities. If possible, this should also include natural resource identifiers such as no further loss of prime habitat (e.g. area of a particular type of wetland).

*Annex G-7: Nigeria.*

Sub-objective 2 (G-7.88) aims at a 20% increase in income from tourism-related activities linked to community-owned projects at the two sites. Is there a baseline that allows this to be accurately assessed? 700 tourists visit HNW's wetlands each year, but how many of these visit the two pilot wetland sites and how much income is generated there? If this is only a fraction of the 700, then 20% is a modest target; if all 700 visit, then a target of 20% may be more reasonable.

How much *Typha* occurs in the wetlands near the two pilot areas? Sub-objective 3 (G-7.88) aims at reducing the extent of *Typha* by 25% by the end of year four, on channels to the sites. Manual clearing of small areas along channels seems do-able, especially as benefits to farmers is directly evident. The overall *Typha* problem is one that probably cannot be tackled in this way – 50,000 ha is a staggering area – what is the ultimate aim? Perhaps the target should be keeping all main canals open (for navigation, irrigation), rather than 25% reduction in extent? Rather than simply ridding oneself of these ‘weeds’, other options might be considered. *Typha* rhizomes can be eaten (they are rich in starch, at least during part of the annual growth cycle) and are nutritious. Other potential uses might include using the leafy stems for thatch, matting and coarse basketry. In some areas, pluck of ripe spikes (the ‘cattail’) is used for stuffing pillows and mattresses; it is potentially also a source of fiber and paper mulch. Harvesting for a wide variety of uses might at least off-set some of the costs/inputs required for managing the species.

*Annex G-8: Senegal/The Gambia.*

Activity 1.2 Develop and integrated transboundary management plan (G-8.107). Is this supported by the formal agreement signed between Senegal and The Gambia, or will support in the form of legal assistance be required to complement this agreement?

Activity 2.1 (G-8.107) Staff Capacity-building, and Activity 3.4 (G-8.108) Sub-regional workshops and exchange program. These activities overlap with Component 2 (outcome 2.1) and Component 3 (outcome 3.3) of the overall project. There should be cross-referencing and an explanation given as to why these are being carried out in an (apparent) stand-alone fashion.

*Annex G-9: South Africa.*

Sub-objective 1 (G-9.122) To develop and promote ecotourism to achieve an increase in visitor numbers of 10%.... This is a very modest target, given that at present there is little in the way of facilities and/or promotion. What is the current annual increment? Is the 10% target over the entire 4-year project period?

*Annex-G-10: Tanzania.*

Fundraising for the center program (Activity 4.4, G-10-146) – if the center can present attractive displays and interesting material, a visit to the center may be incorporated in packages provided by local tourist agencies. This would require co-operating with tour operators early on, to create goodwill and explore ways in which the center may be made attractive and well as an educational/awareness raising asset. In the section on project sustainability (G-10.147), the proponent explains that after equipping the center with educational materials and furniture, there will in first instance be little need for financial resources to cover recurrent costs. However, an ample operational budget should be reserved for (re)printing (this does not appear in the current budget), travel (modest at present, more will be required for visiting schools and communities on a regular basis), and holding ‘events’ (e.g. on World Wetlands Day, Environment Day, or to enable local school children to visit the wetlands).

*Annex G-11: Turkey*

The project rightly focuses on awareness raising and creating the prerequisites for a Ramsar Management Plan. However, the reviewer finds that in 3.5 years more may be achieved in the area of management planning, and it is recommended that the first two years focus on the prerequisites, while in years 3 and 4 concrete steps are taken towards the production of a draft management plan that can be regarded as “work in progress”. Partly, this seems to be occurring (e.g. under Activity 3.3 and 4.2), but the outputs should be more focused towards actual management planning. The review of existing plans (Activity 4.2) may be used as a springboard. Awareness and education programs should continue throughout the entire four years.

The proponent should clarify why one of the two project officers will be based in Ankara or Istanbul, far away from Burdur (paragraph 19, G-11.159). If anyone is based in Istanbul or Ankara, this person should be employed on a part-time basis.

*Annex G-12: Yemen*

Sub-objective 1, develop an integrated management plan for the Aden Wetlands legally endorsed by the Yemeni government (G-12.177). The project cannot guarantee legal endorsement by the government, as this is outside its direct sphere of influence. The project can prepare everything up to the point of endorsement, but the actual endorsement is up to the sovereign state. Outcome 1 (G-12.179) should then read “An integrated management plan for the Aden wetlands fully prepared and ready for endorsement by the Yemeni government by the end of year 3.” Activity 1.6 (para. 25) should read lobbying for the endorsement, rather than securing of the endorsement.

Regular meetings should be scheduled with staff/consultants on the World Bank project for the production of a Master Plan for Aden, to ensure that synergy is achieved (Activity 3.2). Only in this way will you be likely to receive WB funding for implementation.

Budget (G-12.184): Where is the co-financing coming from? The World Bank? This should be clarified.

**A.iv Feasibility of implementation, operation and maintenance.**

There are a number of risks outlined in the Full Project Proposal (including the Logframe in Annex B) that are substantial and real, including:

- Political instability in sub-regions of the flyways.
- Disease on an epidemic scale in one or more waterbird populations.
- Natural catastrophes such as drought.
- Governments cannot financially sustain the increased number of officials working for species and site conservation under the AEWA.
- Use of internet based databases is not limited by internet access difficulties in some regions of the flyway.
- Sufficient capacity exists in each sub-region to staff the sub-regional project centers.
- Trainees are not moved once they have been trained, to positions where they cannot put these new skills to good use.

To these you may add:

- Apparent lack of commitment of governments/states for (joining) AEWA. Currently, only 5 of the 12 requesting countries for the various demonstration project having joined AEWA, for example.
- Project delays leads to loss of co-funding, or opportunities to link up with other ongoing initiatives (e.g. World Bank Master Plan for Aden project, for which the Aden Wetlands Demonstration project is to provide inputs).

However, the Flyways Project generally provides ample mechanisms for addressing potential pitfalls, and mitigates their impacts on the Project. On the whole, the success of the Project depends to a great degree on the commitment of flyway states, and therefore the emphasis should be on states becoming a signatory of AEWA, and meeting its requirements. As many states have joined or are in the process of joining, this is not in serious doubt.

While most (3.1 out of 6.3 million US\$) of the GEF grant will go towards Outcome 3.1 Demonstrations of best practice, the long-term success of this outcome hinges upon the examples provided by the demonstration projects being incorporated into training programs in Component 2.

Long-term success of the project will also require identification and securing of adequate funds for continuation of the program. This will depend on continued commitment by all AEWA member states.

## B. KEY ISSUES

### **B.i Scientific and technical soundness of the project**

Generally, the project brief is technically and scientifically sound; areas of possible deficiency or where some improvements may be made are mentioned under iii, above. Minor points of deficiency are mentioned at the end of this review.

### **B.ii Identification of the global environmental benefits and/or drawbacks of the Project**

The potential global environmental benefits of the Flyways Project are highly significant, as there are 873 designated Ramsar Sites (i.e. Wetlands of International Importance), and a further 2,669 sites identified as 'shadow' Ramsar Sites (under BirdLife International's IBA program) in the African-Eurasian region. These sites together ensure the survival of a large number of (often unique) species (either migratory or sedentary) and habitats (see A.i, above). There are no foreseeable drawbacks for the global environment. Risks are outlined under A.iv.

### **B.iii How the Project fits within the context of the goals of the GEF, as well as its operational strategies, program priorities, Council guidance and the provisions of the relevant conventions**

The Flyways Project is eligible for GEF assistance under Operational Program 2 Coastal, Marine & Freshwater Ecosystems, of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In line with GEF Strategic Considerations<sup>2</sup>, the Project aims to integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within national sustainable development plans and policies. All twelve countries requesting GEF assistance have ratified the CBD.

The project also adheres to the principles of the Joint Work Plan between the CBD and the Ramsar Convention and addresses a number of the Actions in the Strategic Action plan adopted by Contracting Parties at COP8 in Valencia, Spain. Furthermore the project adheres to the principles and activities as agreed in the CBD/CMS Joint Workplan and the CMS/AEWA/Ramsar Joint Workplan as adopted at CBD/CoP6 (April 2002) and CMS/CoP7 (September 2002) respectively. The project concept and approach was presented to the AEWA MoP2 held in September 2002 in Bonn and to the Ramsar CoP8 held in November 2002 in Valencia and was favorably received. Both meetings passed resolutions that endorsed this GEF intervention (AEWA MoP2 Resolution 2.4, operational paragraph 2 and Ramsar CoP8 Resolution 38).

### **B.iv Regional context**

The Flyways Project is fully designed as a regional project, with four recognized sub-regions that are to be represented by sub-regional centers, and programs that run along regional lines. Where possible, the project aims to forge regional interactions and ties, through exchange programs, using demonstration projects for replication, training and awareness programs, etc...The strength of the project lies in the fact that it is regional, without being too dispersed and fragmented as not to have any impacts.

### **B.v Replicability of the Project**

To ensure replicability, the Flyways Project aims at:

- Development of a comprehensive network planning and management tool at flyway scale that is consistent and compatible throughout. Practically, this will involve the development of a portal for linking of existing databases and promoting data exchange and analysis; data gathering along consistent lines; provision of training to harmonize methodologies; incorporating species and site knowledge base in decision making processes.
- Strengthening of capacity of wetland and migratory waterbird conservation, by developing transferable and replicable training modules

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<sup>2</sup> GEF (1995) - Revised Draft GEF Operational Strategy. GEF Council Meeting, September 29, 1995, 84 pp.

in a flyway context, and adapting these to regional, national and local circumstances.

- Implementing 11 demonstration projects that serve to illustrate a wide range of possible issues and interventions, and serve as example or models for replication elsewhere. Replication is to be ensured by means of extensive exchange programs embedded into the project, plus incorporation of these examples into the training and capacity building program under Component 2.
- Building upon existing entities and initiatives wherever possible, be it organizations, databases, or training and awareness programs. These are tried and tested, and are most likely to succeed in other contexts.

Risks that may hinder replicability are:

- limited cooperation between the various sub-regional centers (e.g. due to language and/or cultural barriers);
- inadequate and untimely co-funding (where this is needed for replication);
- insufficient funding made available for exchange programs (this is intentionally under-funded, so as not to make beneficiaries dependent on project funds and to encourage sustainability; however, funding sources need to be present).

On the whole, mechanisms for replication seem appropriate and adequate, and the associated risks are – or can be kept – acceptably low.

## **B.vi Sustainability of the Project**

A number of financial and institutional mechanisms are incorporated in Project design, aimed at promoting sustainability of the Project.

Financial mechanisms

- The Project is designed so that responsibility for and resourcing of the continued implementation of new initiatives is passed on to relevant and committed agencies in the sub-regions.
- To reduce dependency on Project funding, the emphasis is on generating income (e.g. through visitor centers, ecotourism) or attracting extra funds (e.g. bilateral aid, or linking up with a larger project, such as the World Bank Master Plan for Aden project).
- The exchange program, for example, will be developed as a framework only, with minimal budget for implementation. Implementation will depend on engagement of other donors in the respective regions, and on the efforts of those seeking to be involved in exchange programs.
- In addition, commitment of countries within the AEWA region to assisting other countries in the flyway is encouraged and reinforced.

- Some of the demonstration projects include mechanisms for generating income – e.g. from ecotourism or visitor fees – contributing to the financial sustainability of the project.

#### Institutional mechanisms

- Important for sustainability is the continued commitment of governments, international NGOs and MEA stakeholders to the success and longevity of the project’s achievements and outputs.
- For governments and MEA stakeholders, much of this commitment is cemented in the AEWA Implementation Priorities and the Ramsar Convention Strategic Action Plan. In line with this, the Project should therefore strongly emphasize the importance of expanding the number of countries that ratify AEWA.
- Building programs, regional centers and project activities upon existing entities and agencies wherever possible.
- In the training and awareness programs, training-of-trainers is emphasized, along with the creation of sub-regional coordination capacity. Sub-regional Training Boards are to develop sustainability strategies specific to each region to fill funding gaps and continue implementation after finalization of the Project.

These mechanisms for sustainability should be sufficient to ensure that the achievements of the Flyways Project do not wither after completion of the GEF funded intervention. Indeed, sufficient mechanisms are in place to ensure that essential components will continue as long as required.

## C. SECONDARY ISSUES

### C.1 Linkages to other focal areas

Of the other focal areas (mitigation of greenhouse gas emission/climate change, international waters, ozone depletion, POPs), the Project is weakly linked to:

#### Climate change

- in a positive way, by slowing/preventing habitat conversion and maintaining plant biomass (carbon sequestration in natural vegetation), and
- in a slightly negative way, by means of methane emissions from wetlands.

#### International waters

- in a positive way, as these coastal wetland areas are (regionally) linked via the migration of waterbirds (and some areas also by migration of marine turtles).

## **C.ii Linkages to other programs and action plans at regional or sub-regional level**

The Project is well-linked with regional programs and action plans, including:

- commitments and actions related to the Ramsar Convention (11 of the 12 requesting countries have ratified the convention);
- the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), which has been signed and ratified by 5 of the 12 requesting countries, and other countries have signaled their intention to do so;
- the sub-regional centers of the Project will be based on existing regional centers of expertise;
- in the European context, the project will be linked with the EU's Natura 2000 network, and the EU's EUROSITE program.

In addition, the Project will take on board elements from existing National Wetland Policies, National Biodiversity Strategies, National Environmental Action Plans (where they have been formulated in the 12 requesting countries) – all of which include (some elements of) regional linkages.

## **C.iii Other beneficial or damaging environmental effects**

The Flyways Project should have favorable to highly favorable overall environmental impacts if its key outputs are achieved.

In the case of some of the demonstration projects there remains, however, the usual concern that substantial project investment in a poor rural areas may stimulate immigration, leading to increased pressures at project completion than would otherwise have been the case. This risk will hopefully be significantly reduced by the improved conservation and wetland resource management developed by the Project. The strong emphasis on Project sustainability and continuation of monitoring activities is therefore desirable.

Other sites in the African-Eurasian flyway are likely to benefit from implementation of the Project, due to replication of demonstration projects, increased capacities, exchange programs, and increased (active) membership of the AEWA.

## **C.iv Degree of involvement of stakeholders in the Project**

Project design and proposed implementation methodologies incorporate varying degrees of stakeholder involvement. In most instances this appears to be based on consultation rather than more active participation. However, the large scale of the Project makes a more active involvement of local stakeholders in the design stage somewhat unwieldy.

The Project Steering Committee will include international NGOs, MEAs, along with executing and implementing agencies (UNEP and UNOPS). Government agencies of

requesting countries appear under-represented, and limited to representatives from each of the sub-regions.

During Project implementation there will be more scope for active stakeholder participation, for example, at the sub-regions local stakeholders will assist with 'regionalizing' the design of module programs. Also, local stakeholders are actively involved in various stages of implementation of the 11 demonstration projects.

#### **C.v Capacity building aspects**

The proponents of the Flyways Project recognize that capacity building is central to its success, and have dealt with this accordingly in project design. Capacity building is a major part of Components 1 and 3, while Component 2 consists entirely of several capacity building programs.

#### **C.vi Innovativeness of the Project**

In the African-Eurasian flyway there has never been an initiative or project of this size, scope or magnitude addressing the issues of migratory waterbird and wetland conservation and management. It is highly innovative in its approach, especially in the linking of existing databases and making them accessible in the public domain, developing training and awareness modules and devolving their finalization to sub-regional centers, and developing programs designed to identify their own funding (e.g. the exchange program).

#### **D. MINOR CHANGES SUGGESTED FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE FLYWAYS PROPOSAL**

Full Project Proposal main document. Paragraph 33. Component 1: Scientific basis for conservation... . 'Rational basis' is perhaps more appropriate.

Full Project Proposal main document. Paragraph 69: Sustainable capacity will be developed in the focal sub-regions to provide resources to assist access to wise use guidance and information in order to supplement the role of the MEAs.

Spell-check should be applied to whole document, especially the various demonstration projects (G2-G12).

Annex G2: p.2.5: *Fulica Antra* should read *Fulica atra*. 'damaging' (paragraph 4, pG2-6) should read 'affecting'.

Annex G-6: p6.71: *Cyperus papyrus* should read *Cyperus papyrus*. *Vitivera* should read *Vetivera*.

Annex G-7: p7.84: *Mytragyna* should read *Mitragyna*. *Anas Querquedula* should read *Anas querquedula*.

Annex G-9: p.9-121: paragraphs 10 and 11 need to be joined (=one paragraph, inadvertently split).

Annex G-11. para.2: 'The Ramsar Convention is the most effectively applied convention..' Surely the proponent means 'environmental convention'? para. 9: indutrail should read industrial. Para.23: cuurriculum should read curriculum. 5. Timetable does not have a legend for the columns.

Annex G-12. Table 1a: *Egretta Gularis* should read *Egretta gularis*; *Aquila elanga* should read *Aquila clanga*. Para. 21: Establish and run of a stakeholder... should read 'establishing and running of a stakeholder...' Para.22: 'populate a database' should read 'staffing of a database'?

Uft, the Netherlands,  
23<sup>rd</sup> February 2003

Wim Giesen

## STAP – Supplementary Review of GEF Investment Project Proposal

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**Project Title:** Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways

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In January 2003 the reviewer carried out an independent STAP review of the ‘Flyways’ proposal. Subsequently, however, there were changes in one component, necessitating redesign of the proposal. This supplementary STAP review focuses entirely on changes to the original proposal and the impacts that this may have on project components.

### CONTENTS:

- A. Key issues
- a.i Scientific and technical soundness of the changes to the original GEF Project Brief and how the redesign impacts the overall soundness of the project (if at all).
  - a.ii Highlight positive and negative impacts of the redesign on the overall project.
  - a.iii Replicability and sustainability of the changes to the Project Brief (added value for the global environment beyond the project itself).
- B. Secondary Issues
- b.i Linkages to other programmes and action plans at regional or sub-regional level
  - b.ii Capacity building aspects
  - b.iii Innovativeness of the Project
-

**A. Key issues**

*a.i Scientific and technical soundness of the changes to the original GEF Project Brief and how the redesign impacts the overall soundness of the project (if at all).*

The main changes to the original Project Brief are to:

Component 1 “Rational basis for conservation activities strengthened through development of a comprehensive, flyway scale, critical site network planning and management tool”, where the updating and expanding of wetland directories (Outcome 1.5 of the original Project Brief) has been cut.

Component 2 “Strengthened decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation”, where implementation of the four sub-regional Training and Awareness Programmes (Outcome 2.3 of the original Project Brief) has been cut.

Shelving of the proposal to establish four sub-regional project centres (within existing agencies).

Reduction of co-funding from US\$ 20.3 million to US\$ 6.8 million.

Re-allocation of GEF funds, from Components 1 and 3 to Component 2, but also within components.

Re i): The production of wetland directories (outcome 1.5 of original Project Brief) is not as critical for implementing Component 1 as outcomes 1.1-1.4, as the site network planning and management tool can function well without the existence of wetland directories. Also, once outcomes 1.1 and 1.2 are achieved, the basis is also laid for the (eventual later) production of regional wetland directories. Given that local capacities are to be increased by the project, this may be achieved without further GEF input or intervention, given the existing basis (e.g. Directory of Wetlands of the Middle East) and ongoing initiatives (e.g. inclusion of Central Asian states in the revision of the AWI).

Re ii): Of the three project components, Component 2 is most significantly affected by the major reduction of co-funding. Wetland and waterbird conservation Training and Awareness Raising Programmes are to be produced under Outcome 2.2, but there will no longer be an implementation programme (as intended under Outcome 2.3 of the original Project Brief). Funds for implementation are to be raised during the project in a joint activity between sub-regional stakeholder organisations and the Project lead contractors and subcontractors. On the one hand, this will increase sub-regional ownership of the project. On the other hand, there is a risk that training and awareness programmes are delayed, not carried out during the life of the project, or not carried out at all. This risk is not adequately highlighted in the project logframe (Annex B) or in the Risks and Sustainability section of the revised Project Brief. Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2 are a pre-requisite, but do not automatically lead to “Strengthened decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation” as envisaged under Component 2. Only implementation of these programmes leads to actual strengthening. Either the title and aim of Component 2 needs to be reworded (e.g. establishing a basis for capacity building...), or firm guarantees for funding of implementation of these programmes need to be provided.

Re iii): The shelving of the sub-regional centres is a logical consequence of ii) (above), as one of their main tasks would have been the coordination of the development and implementation of the sub-regional training and awareness programmes. Development of sub-regional programmes will now be carried out by sub-regionally based subcontractor organisations, in conjunction with the Sub-Regional Training Boards, which is likely to be an effective approach.

Re iv): Reduction of co-funding has mainly affected Component 2, especially outcomes 2.2 and 2.3, which have been significantly reduced (2.2, from US\$3.4 million to US\$ 0.9 million) or eliminated (2.3). Funding of the development of the sub-regional TAR programmes now stands at slightly more than US\$ 200,000 (including co-funding) per sub-region. This seems to be rather minimal (and possibly insufficient?), given that outcome 2.2 is to be based on sub-contracting, and will involve the establishing of training boards and include the translation of modules. How will the quality be maintained given the significantly reduced financial input?

Re v): Re-allocation of GEF funds. The main changes have been re-allocation (of US\$ 0.5 million) to outcomes 2.1 and 2.2, which were formerly entirely funded by co-funding agencies, and a significant reduction of GEF inputs to outcomes 1.2 and 3.3. Outcome 1.2 “Enhancement of primary data sources” involves collection of primary data on critical sites, while 3.3 “Exchange Programme” involves the exchange of wetland management practitioners within and between sub-regions. Both 1.2 and 3.3 remain operational due to increased co-funding, whereby the total input to 1.2 remains virtually unchanged, while 3.3 is halved but still manageable.

*a.ii Highlight positive and negative impacts of the redesign on the overall project.*

The impacts of the redesign are mainly negative (and are already elaborated above under a.i), although not dramatically so:

- Wetland Directories will not be produced or updated; this is a moderately negative impact, as WDs are not critical for overall project success.
- The capacity building component (2) will largely focus on developing programmes and a framework for capacity building. However, without project mediated *implementation*, there is a risk that there will not be a significant direct increase in capacity during the life of the project.
- Reduced funds for developing sub-regional TAR programmes (outcome 2.2) may result in a reduced quality of these products.
- Halving of the budget for the exchange programme (outcome 3.3) may reduce local interest and result in less cross-pollination of ideas (this is at least partly off-set by increased funding for wise use implementation; see below). However, as stated in the revised Project Brief, reduced funding will necessitate the active involvement of local stakeholders, which in turn “will ensure that the Programme is driven by the enthusiasm and commitment of the relevant agencies and not purely by project funding”.

Positive impacts of project redesign:

- Although posing an immediate risk, the medium to long-term sustainability of the TAR programme may be enhanced by the fact that there are no funds for implementation under the present project. This approach will lead to an early need to identify funding sources (other than the present project/GEF) for implementation, enhancing local ownership and sustainability of the programme (see a.iii).
- Funding has been increased for improved wise use implementation (outcome 3.4), from US\$ 190,000 to US\$ 329,500. This capacity building programme mitigates (to some degree) the reduced budgets for the exchange programme (3.3).

*a.iii Replicability and sustainability of the changes to the Project Brief (added value for the global environment beyond the project itself).*

Under the original design, the project needed to develop capacity – especially at the sub-regional level – for generating funds for continuation of the training and awareness programmes. After re-designing, the need for seeking sustainable funding sources for training programme has been brought forward, and there will be more emphasis from (and pressure on) the project to identify funding sources well before the end of the project. While presenting a potential risk – certainly in the short-term – this may enhance local ownership and increase sustainability of the programme as relationships with donors and other potential contributors will be fostered well before the end of the project.

In the redesigned project, sub-regional project centres will no longer be established, and the Sub-Regional Training Boards will largely be responsible for implementation of the TAR programme. As elaborated in Annex F of the revised proposal, four Sub-Regional Training Boards are to be established (Activity 2.1) and serviced by sub-contracted organisations based in the sub-regions. The SRTB structure envisaged by the proponent is a loose one: “... they are not designed as bureaucratic or administrative structures, but as practical fora for participating in the process of sub-regional Programme development.” This may be too loose an arrangement to ensure sustainability and continuation beyond the life of the project, especially in the absence of the sub-regional centres. On the one hand, sustainability is ensured by SRTB membership of Ramsar Bureau, WI and BLI. On the other hand, government interest may wane if the SRTBs are perceived to be largely an INGO-driven undertaking.

It is unclear which agency will be responsible for fund raising for the TAR programme, certainly beyond the life of the project. The revised Project Brief states that “Fundraising for Programme implementation will be collaborative with the help of the Project, ensuring full sub-regional ownership” but who is to be responsible for this? Under the original Project Brief (Annex I, para. 43) the Sub-Regional Training Boards were to assist with fund-raising, but in the revised brief this has been dropped, and the SRTBs are to meet only once a year.

## *B. Secondary Issues*

*b.i Linkages to other programmes and action plans at regional or sub-regional level*

With respect to linkages with other programs and action plans at the regional or sub-regional level, the redesigned project remains much the same as in the original Project Brief, namely, it is well-linked with regional programs and action plans, including:

- commitments and actions related to the Ramsar Convention (11 of the 12 requesting countries have ratified the convention);
- the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), which has been signed and ratified by 5 of the 12 requesting countries, and other countries have signalled their intention to do so;
- the sub-regional centres of the Project will be based on existing regional centres of expertise;
- in the European context, the project will be linked with the EU's Natura 2000 network, and the EU's EUROSITE program.

In addition, the Project will take on board elements from existing National Wetland Policies, National Biodiversity Strategies, National Environmental Action Plans (where they have been formulated in the 12 requesting countries) – all of which include (some elements of) regional linkages.

#### *b.ii Capacity building aspects*

The proponent of the Flyways Project recognizes that capacity building is central to its success, and has designed the project accordingly. In the redesigned brief, capacity building still forms the major part of Components 1 and 3 (e.g. Outcome 1.3 strengthening of monitoring capacity; Outcome 3.2 Strengthened communications mechanisms, Outcome 3.3 Exchange programme, Outcome 3.4 Improved Wise Use implementation), while Component 2 focuses entirely on capacity building programmes. Compared with the original brief there is a reduction in implementation of capacity building programmes – unfortunate, but inevitable given the significant reduction in co-funding. The redesigned project foresees in identifying and tapping into additional funding sources for implementation of developed capacity building programmes.

#### *b.iii Innovativeness of the Project*

This remains unchanged in the redesigned Project Brief: in the African-Eurasian flyway there has never been an initiative or project of this size, scope or magnitude addressing the issues of migratory waterbird and wetland conservation and management. The Project is highly innovative in its approach, especially in the linking of existing databases and making them accessible in the public domain, developing training and awareness modules and devolving their finalization to sub-regional centres, and developing programs designed to identify their own funding (e.g. the exchange programme).

Ulft, 31<sup>st</sup> August 2003

Wim Giesen

## **ANNEX C1: RESPONSE TO STAP**

### GENERAL COMMENT

We note with appreciation the reviewer's positive overall judgement of the proposal, the recognition of the scientific and technical soundness of the project design and of the global environmental benefits that the project will provide. We would like to record our thanks to the reviewer for his constructive and helpful comments on the project. These have been carefully considered and our responses are noted below.

All responses to the STAP Reviewer's comments are referenced with the section headings and paragraph numbers of the STAP Reviewer's document.

### RESPONSES

#### **Section A.ii, Cost Effectiveness in achieving focal area objective(s).**

*Paragraph 5.*

**Issue 1:** The Reviewer requests elaboration of the PCU and overhead costs in the full GEF project document.

**Response 1:** We agree with the Reviewer's request for greater clarification. We have added a paragraph in the Project Brief under the section "Incremental Costs and Project Financing". This paragraph reads: *"Tables 1 and 2 present budget lines separately describing the PCU and overhead costs for the project. The PCU costs cover the staff, office and travel / subsistence costs for the staff that will be employed by UNOPS to coordinate the project. These are met entirely from GEF funds because the PCU will ensure coordination of all activities around the central objective of the project; its role will not be specific project related technical execution. The Overhead Costs represent an 8% overhead for all project activities except for the demonstration projects (these costs are shown in the individual project budgets). In Table 2, the GEF contribution to overhead costs is shown to be \$433.748 and this is the overhead cost for involvement of UNOPS. This is the estimated cost of engaging UNOPS as the*

*project executor. The remaining overhead cost is allocated to the agencies executing co-financed activities and totals \$1.406.268. This will be met from co-financing.”*

*Paragraph 6*

**Issue 2:** The Reviewer raises the issue that the demonstration project baseline is a low proportion of the incremental cost and that there should be some clarification that the GEF funds are not supplanting the baseline.

**Response 2:** We agree that we need to more effectively present this. The baseline is low for this element of the project because it is not designed to take account of all of the existing wetland management projects, but of those that have been designed with “demonstration” in mind. The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate best practices to stakeholders across the flyway, i.e. the demonstration outcome is the focus. The vast majority of benefits will therefore be global; increasing capacity to conserve flyway/migratory species will result in the provision of global benefits. Of course some site-based benefits will occur and we recognise that we need to more clearly show this in the proposal. We have provided a best estimate of the baseline for each priority activity being executed in the demonstration projects (i.e. not a baseline for the entire demonstration project site). We have summarised this information in the Project Brief document under the Section “Incremental Costs and Project Financing”. The information has been added to Tables 1 and 2 together with a paragraph of text to explain the demonstration projects’ baseline and the role of GEF funds in the execution of the priority activities.

**Page 3, A.iii Adequacy of project design**

*Paragraph 8*

**Issue 3:** The Reviewer feels that the need to address language barriers to communication in the project area is insufficiently addressed in the Project Brief document.

**Response 3:** We agree that the importance of enhanced communications in different languages is insufficiently presented in the Project Brief document. We have added information under “Stakeholder Participation” section; paragraph 91 has been amended to include specific mention of the measures taken to overcome the language barriers.

*Paragraph 9*

**Issue 4:** The Reviewer requests the substantiation of the relative unimportance of wetland habitats to migratory waterbirds, that is referred to in paragraph 2 of the Project Brief.

**Response 4:** Agreed. We have amended paragraph 2 in the Project Brief document by adding the following sentence after sentence 7 (“Thus each flyway...”). *“The importance of non-wetland sites to migratory waterbirds, such as agricultural land, is undoubted but its conservation and management in this respect is considered less pressing.”*

*Paragraph 10*

**Issue 5:** The Reviewer highlights the approach taken to develop the demonstration projects.

**Response 5:** We agree with the Reviewer's interpretation and have highlighted this information in the Project Brief in line with amendments described under Response 25.

*Paragraph 11*

**Issue 6:** The Reviewer emphasises that based on information in paragraph 19-20, there should be significant emphasis on increasing the accession of States to AEWA, within the body text of the proposal.

**Response 6:** We agree that this must be a priority for States in the project area. There are already a number of activities that will help facilitate this. The Reviewer notes the role of the shadowing activities described in paragraph 69 of the project brief. This process will also be used to create capacity in staff in sub-regions to assist non-acceded countries in understanding the Agreement and to prepare the necessary documentation. There are also awareness raising workshops under the activities in Component 2 (see Table 5, page F.23 and F.24, annex F) which will help facilitate this process of engaging non-acceded countries. However, it should also be noted that accession to MEAs is not this project's primary objective and so the weight attached to this in the project document corresponds to this. Therefore we feel that there is sufficient information in the Annexes of the proposal.

*Paragraph 12*

**Issue 7:** The Reviewer suggests that in paragraph 24-27, the EU's Natura 2000 Site network should be added as an initiative that the overall GEF project should link to.

**Response 7:** We agree that this is an important initiative that could be usefully linked to by the project and have added it in paragraph 26 in the project brief, alongside other 'non-GEF' initiatives.

*Paragraph 13*

**Issue 8:** Based on information presented in paragraphs 36-38 of the Project Brief, the Reviewer asks who is to maintain the web-based portal for the critical site network tool and how awareness of the availability of CD-ROM based versions of the tool will be raised.

**Response 8:** WCMC will develop and maintain the web-based portal under the agreement currently in place between them and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat (see Annex E, page E-10, paragraph 32). Awareness of the CD-ROM and the web-based resource will be raised throughout the project via activities described in paragraphs 35, 36 and 37 in Annex E. Materials in four languages will be developed for distribution at related workshops and meetings. Training will be provided in the use of the tool as soon as its framework is finalised. Awareness of the forthcoming and completed tool will be raised at all relevant training and awareness raising meetings and there will be an official launch

of the tool at an international meeting. This information has been added to paragraphs 36-38 to ensure that the strategy is clear.

*Paragraph 14*

**Issue 9:** The Reviewer requests that reference to the directories of wetlands to be developed in paragraph 47 of the project brief be clarified to include reference to the existing initiatives it will build on. The link to the Asian Wetland Inventory is also queried.

**Response 9:** We agree; paragraph 47 has been edited to include reference to the Middle East Wetlands Directory that it will be built on. The Asian Wetlands Inventory approach will form the basis for the development of the new directories; this will also be clarified in paragraph 47. However, it should be noted, that the Asian Wetland Inventory is not a project that will develop a Central Asian wetland inventory. It provides a uniform and internationally supported protocol to develop wetland inventories; the area of application of this includes Central Asia.

*Paragraph 15*

**Issue 10:** The Reviewer queries the fact that in paragraph 56 reference is made to regional stakeholders developing the (training and awareness raising) programme, suggesting that this will be a joint activity with the project.

**Response 10:** The Reviewer's point is correct and this is much more clearly explained in Annex F, paragraphs 38-41, pages F.12-F.13. Paragraph 56 has been edited to clarify the role of the project in the development of the programme, which will be a joint exercise between the project (through the Sub-Regional Project Centres) and sub-regional stakeholders.

*Paragraph 16*

**Issue 11:** The Reviewer suggests that in paragraphs 61-62 links should be made with the Ramsar Handbooks in Wise Use of Wetlands, and suggests that they should be translated into other languages of importance to the project area.

**Response 11:** This is addressed in activities that take place under Component 3, Outcome 3.4. The Ramsar Wise Use handbooks will be translated into the languages suggested by the Reviewer (see Annex H, paragraph 35 for more details). We have amended paragraph 69 to include reference to these documents in the Project Brief document.

*Paragraph 17*

**Issue 12:** The Reviewer queries what communications tools other than a project newsletter will be used to foster international communications.

**Response 12:** The project strategy is to maximise the use of the various communications mechanisms available without over-investing in the development of new ones that would overlap with existing initiatives. The main internet web-sites of Wetlands International, BirdLife International, the Ramsar Convention and the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat will be

used. A new electronic discussion forum focused on migratory waterbird issues will be developed through the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat. We have further highlighted these issues in the Project Document by amending paragraph 60 with these details.

*Paragraph 18*

**Issue 13:** The Reviewer suggests that the mechanisms of exchange proposed in paragraph 65-67 do not sufficiently focus on the exchange of information as well as the exchange of people.

**Response 13:** Noted. However, we feel that there is already ample opportunity for exchange of information threaded throughout the project. Training and awareness raising workshops and seminars in Component 2 will provide mechanisms for exchange of information. The project web-site will provide intranet resources available in different languages for use by stakeholders. The electronic discussion forum will provide a virtual interactive environment to exchange information. The development of sub-regional capacity in Sub-Regional Project Centres will enable enhanced exchange of information between Secretariats of MEAs and government level decision makers.

*Paragraph 19*

**Issue 14:** The Reviewer suggests that in Outcome 3.4, paragraph 69, should be included assistance in project proposal drafting, that would enable lessons to be learned from the demonstration projects.

**Response 14:** Noted. However, we feel that this is already sufficiently dealt with in the training programmes that will be provided under Component 2. In Annex F, Table 5, Activity 3.1, there is a proposed course for inclusion in the sub-regional training and awareness raising programmes, entitled “Project development and writing proposals”. We do not feel that the link to the experiences of the demonstration project proposals is entirely valid because they have focused on one specific aspect of best practice and not the entire suite of activities necessary for sustainable management of a site. However, relevant lessons learned from this process will be filtered through to the above-mentioned course.

*Paragraph 20*

**Issue 15:** The Reviewer highlights that in addition to risks identified in paragraphs 70-74, there are other external risks associated with resource use outside the critically important sites, and with timing of funding from GEF / co-financiers which may not coincide with the requirements of the demonstration projects.

**Response 15:** We agree that these are potential risks. The risks of ‘off-site’ resource use to successful Project implementation are most pronounced in terms of the demonstration projects. These have been selected as far as possible in locations where these problems are minimised or manageable. Some risks do remain though. The risk of irregular or untimely flow of funding would also be most likely to adversely affect the demonstration projects. They been designed as far as possible to meet the uncertainty arising from vagaries in co-financing and it will be the job of the local executing agencies together

with Wetlands international and BirdLife International to manage these problems should they arise. Paragraph 72 has been revised to include these additional risks whilst retaining the existing information in the paragraph.

*Paragraph 21*

**Issue 16:** The Reviewer highlights that in paragraph 73, the fact that seconded staff will be seconded for the duration of the project should be emphasised, as a mechanism to minimise risks of staff unavailability.

**Response 16:** Noted; we have made the necessary amendments to paragraph 73..

*Paragraph 22*

**Issue 17:** The Reviewer highlights the need for the paragraphs on sustainability to include reference to the provision of opportunities for stakeholders to develop their skills in drafting proposals. This should be built on lessons learned from the development of ‘wise use demonstration projects’.

**Response 17:** Please see Response 14. In the light of this comment, we have edited paragraph 77 to include mention the opportunities to develop project proposal drafting skills.

*Paragraph 23*

**Issue 18:** The Reviewer queries the degree of involvement of governments in the Project Steering Committee. It is requested that the word ‘*involved*’ in paragraph 81 is clarified and that the involvement of governments in the Steering Committee is more direct and balanced.

**Response 18:** We agree with the Reviewer that the use of the word ‘*involved*’ in paragraph 81 is rather vague. We have edited this paragraph to clarify their role. However, the involvement of governments within the Steering Committee is in our view balanced and sensible when weighed against the additional costs and complexity of running a larger Project Steering Committee (that would arise if greater government involvement were agreed). Further details of the various Steering Committees are presented in Annex I. We have divided the responsibilities of steering between two scales, flyway and sub-regional. The former will deal with overall project issues and steering whilst the latter will deal with specifically sub-regional issues. The latter is where we feel that government concerns are most appropriately addressed. The Project Steering Committee will have one representative from each sub-region taking part. This person will be the chair of the Sub-Regional Steering Committee and will take part to represent the interests of the sub-regional governments. In each sub-region up to 5 different governments can be involved in the Sub-Regional Steering Committee (the host government representative will be the chair, plus four others, which could include requesting countries). This means that there are potentially 20 government representatives involved in steering the project. In response to the Reviewer’s comments we have clarified the role of governments in the Sub-Regional Steering Committees in paragraph 84.

*Paragraph 24*

**Issue 19:** The Reviewer highlights a contradiction between paragraphs 56 and 89, where the involvement of stakeholders in the training and awareness raising programmes is described as being to ‘develop the Programmes’ and ‘involve them in a consultative role’.

**Response 19:** Noted. Please see Response 10. Paragraph 89 has been amended in line with this to remove the contradiction.

*Logframe (Annex B)*

*Paragraph 25*

**Issue 20:** The Reviewer asks how many site management plans have been developed and implemented that can be used as a baseline to evaluate project success against performance indicator 3 on page B-3.

**Response 20:** We agree that it would be preferable to indicate the baseline in the text. The Ramsar Sites database can be used to provide an analysis of sites that currently have Ramsar Site Management Plans in place and have been designated in part / entirely on the basis of importance to migratory waterbirds. Currently the Database is being updated with the National Reports submitted for Ramsar CoP8 and so the records are not accurate. However, by the time the project starts this process will be complete and an accurate assessment of the number of management plans will be possible. At the same time an analysis of the trends in development will be carried out to re-examine the 15% increase proposed in the indicator text. A revised figure will be agreed with the Project Steering Committee on the basis of this. We have amended the indicator text to better reflect this.

*Paragraph 26*

**Issue 21:** The Reviewer queries how many critically important sites there are at present, in order to establish a baseline for evaluation of performance indicator 1, page B-4.

**Response 21:** There are already a large number of critically important sites with data in the databases that will form the basis of the site network tool. Therefore we feel that this target is not unrealistic. Currently though we cannot estimate the exact number because this will become clear during the project. We will establish the baseline figure in the first year of the project, which is a common practice now in GEF projects. If the 90% estimate then looks unrealistic it will be revised in collaboration with the Project Steering Committee.

*Paragraph 27*

**Issue 22:** The Reviewer queries the assumption identified under Outcome 1.1, page B-4 concerning the access to Internet; it is felt that this is too optimistic.

**Response 22:** Noted. The assumption is poorly written. We have amended it to read, “Access to the site network tool is not limited by access to the Internet in some project

sub-regions”. The project has developed strategies to overcome this problem through the development and distribution of hard copy and CD-ROM snapshots of the site network.

*Paragraph 28*

**Issue 23:** The Reviewer highlights ambiguity in performance indicator 4, page B-7. It is unclear what is meant by “*exceed 80%*”

**Response 23:** Noted. The indicator is poorly worded and we have amended this. It now reads as follows: “*During the development of sub-regional programmes, the courses to be developed will be assigned a target number of trainees/delegates, that will be agreed by the sub-regional stakeholders. Actual numbers at courses will be compared to target numbers and where this exceeds 80%, the course will be considered to have been successful.*”

*Paragraph 29*

**Issue 24:** The Reviewer suggests a rewording of performance indicator 5, page B-7.

**Response 24:** We accept the proposed revision of the wording and have amended the indicator accordingly.

*Overall Annexes G: Demonstration projects.*

*Paragraph 30*

**Issue 25:** The Reviewer requests that a general introduction to the demonstration projects be provided that includes clarification of the coherence between the demonstration projects.

**Response 25:** We agree and have added a paragraph in the Annex G, “Introduction” section and highlighted key points in paragraph 62 of the Project Brief document. The additional information has been formulated in response to the above-specified comment but also to emphasise points raised by the Reviewer in paragraphs 3, 13 and the last paragraph under section A.ii. The key points that have been added are summarised here:

The scope of the demonstration projects was defined during the development of the PDF-B and this has been followed throughout the development of the proposals contained in the full GEF project brief and Annex G. In this regard 4 key points must be noted:

1. The demonstration projects were not designed to address all of the threats at a particular site;
2. The demonstration projects are designed to demonstrate one particular aspect/focus of best practice management (although in some cases additional aspects of best practice management are demonstrated as these must be implemented to support the main objective);
3. The demonstration sites have been designed to address specifically site-based threats and issues and not wider scale threats and issues such as catchment water resource management.
4. The specific aspects of best practice were selected to demonstrate issues felt to be of greatest significance to site managers in a flyway context.

NOTE: All paragraph numbers referred to in demonstration project comments below, refer to paragraph numbers in the respective demonstration proposals and not in the overall Project Brief document.

*Estonia, Paragraph 31*

**Issue 26:** The Reviewer requests clarification over the reference to the Estonian “Nature 2000” initiative, on page G-2.6, asking if this refers to the EU’s Natura 2000 initiative.

**Response 26:** Noted. This is the case and the proposal has been amended to clarify this.

*Estonia, Paragraph 32*

**Issue 27:** The Reviewer identifies an apparent contradiction between different environmental changes representing threats to the system; reversion to reed (paragraph 6) versus unsustainable reed harvesting (paragraph 7).

**Response 27:** Noted. In Table 1 of the demonstration project proposal, four different habitat types are identified; coastal meadows, reed beds, woodlands and open water. Each of these are experiencing different changes in response to the identified threats and paragraphs 6 and 7 refer to these different habitat types. We have amended paragraph 7, page –2.7 to clarify this difference.

*Hungary, Paragraphs 33 and 34*

**Issue 28:** The Reviewer queries the current situation concerning the economics side of the fishponds as presented in paragraphs 8 and 9. It is proposed that there is uneven distribution of benefits from the fishponds and that this can be interpreted as being due to the extensively managed ponds being less profitable. In paragraph 21b it is suggested that if this is the case then those that have lost income through extensification will be reluctant to participate in the project and should be targeted early on in the project.

**Response 28:** The Reviewer’s interpretation of uneven income distribution is correct. This will be addressed through the engagement of local communities in ecotourism related activities (note however, that site is not managed by MME/BirdLife Hungary but by Biharugra Halgazdasag Ltd). We agree that targeting of disenfranchised communities will be useful and we have amended Activity 3.3, paragraph 30 accordingly.

*Lithuania, Paragraph 35*

**Issue 29:** The Reviewer queries who will be responsible for the long-term maintenance of the water pumping equipment and how it will be funded.

**Response 29:** The administration of the Nemunas River Delta Park will be responsible for ensuring that the water pumping equipment continues to operate in the demonstration site and will fund this through increased ecotourism income. We have amended paragraph 15 to clarify this.

*Mauritania, Paragraph 36*

**Issue 30:** The Reviewer queries the fact that the Mauritanian proposal refers to the development of an ecotourism strategy as a demonstration project activity and then states that an ecotourism strategy has already been developed.

**Response 30:** The PNBA has indeed printed a preliminary Ecotourism Strategy. This short document outlined priority actions, but did not go into significant detail. One of the actions identified was to ‘exploit’ the great potential of ornithological ecotourism, which would then be a component of the overall ecotourism strategy. Other ecotourism activities in the park would focus on ‘desert safaris’, traditional boat (lanche) trips, visits to Imraguen villages etc. The existing Strategy does not have particular shortcomings, but is a brief guiding document and does not go into details about ‘how’, ‘where’ and ‘when’ such actions as developing and implementing ornithological ecotourism should take place. To address this issue we have amended the text in paragraph 9, to better explain this.

*Mauritania, Paragraph 37*

**Issue 31:** The Reviewer suggests that targets need to be set for numbers of visitors and that consideration should be given to providing soft loans to the local Imraguen.

**Response 31:** Specific targets in terms of numbers of visitors and revenue were not given, though ‘at least 5 reputable international ecotourism operators’ is mentioned. It was expected these targets would be set after achievement of Activity 1.3, when carrying capacity of the park and desired frequency of visits would be established. It would be expected that a minimum of 500 visitors and \$10,000 per year would be achieved, but this will be given greater attention in year 1 of the project. We have amended paragraph 20 to include mention of this approach.

The recommendation of ‘soft loans for establishing tourist facilities’ will be considered during development of the strategy in Year 1, especially in Activity 1.1 and 1.2. Such ventures have been negotiated in the past, especially in aiding the Imraguen to make new boats. We have amended paragraph 19 to include mention of this.

*Niger, Paragraph 38*

**Issue 32:** The Reviewer queries the reasons for poorly defined local management structures as defined in paragraph 21 (page G-6.74).

**Response 32:** This project presents a new kind of approach for Niger; local management structures have tended to bypass/ignore natural resource management, focusing more on other sectors. This lack of definition does not result from recent changes, more from low local government resources. Further external pressures will be limited by enforcement of the local consensual code. As stated in Activity 2.2.

*Niger, Paragraph 39*

**Issue 33:** The Reviewer requests that measurable indicators of improved management of natural resources should be presented in the logframe.

**Response 33:** The means of verification for the Immediate Objective mention “Reports on the status of natural resource use, biodiversity and local productivity / income”. More precisely, concerning biodiversity, it is expected that there will be a measurable increase in the number and diversity of waterbirds at the site, and that wetland diversity will be, at the minimum, maintained. However, it is rather hard to be ‘definite’ in an area such as the Sahel, which is prone to unforeseen environmental factors such as effects of drought. More specific measurable biodiversity and habitat related indicators will be specified in the first 6 months of the project in collaboration with organisations involved with biodiversity monitoring (see paragraph 7, page G-6.72).

*Nigeria, Paragraph 40*

**Issue 34:** The Reviewer queries the meaning of a 20% increase in tourism-related income for the Nigerian proposal under sub-objective 2. It is not clear whether the figures included in the proposal are for the Hadejia Nguru Wetlands as a whole or for the pilot sites.

**Response 34:** A baseline to measure tourism-related income will be established in the early stages of the project and progress monitored through surveys outlined in Activity 2.5, paragraphs 27-28. The number of tourists visiting (700) relates to the Hadejia Nguru wetlands as a whole and not the pilot sites. The proportion of increase (20%) therefore relates to those that visit the pilot sites; we accept that at this stage this is a difficult figure to estimate. In response to the Reviewers comment we have removed reference to 20% and amend the text to explain that this figure will be established early in the project when the baseline has been more accurately established. This figure will be agreed with the stakeholders in the sites and approved by the local Steering Committee.

*Nigeria, Paragraph 41*

**Issue 35:** The Reviewer queries whether a 25% reduction of Typha cover in the Hadejia Nguru wetlands is possible and proposes alternative measures to control the species, that might assist those proposed to achieve this target.

**Response 35:** The ultimate aim of the demonstration project is to reduce Typha cover in channels to the pilot sites by 25%. The aim of the demonstration project is therefore to provide a model of how this sort of clearance can be achieved over wider areas. It is accepted that such approaches might not be possible in all of the wider area but certainly such an approach seems likely to form part of any future strategy. The results of this approach will be made available to communities elsewhere. The proposal has been edited to make this clearer.

*Senegal/The Gambia, Paragraph 42*

**Issue 36:** The Reviewer queries whether or not the integrated transboundary management plan will be supported by a formal agreement signed between Senegal and Gambia.

**Response 36:** Indeed, this is already supported by the formal agreement signed between Senegal and The Gambia. There will need to be formal communication between

governmental departments within each country, but no problem is envisaged here, and no additional legal assistance anticipated.

*Senegal/The Gambia, Paragraph 43*

**Issue 37:** The Reviewer asks whether there is overlap between the provision of staff capacity building activities mentioned in the proposal and the overall GEF project Training and Awareness raising Programmes outlined in Component 2.

**Response 37:** These activities certainly relate to the training objectives of the overall project, and complement it. However, the workshop is envisaged more as a ‘strategic’ workshop, which will hopefully lead to further such trans-boundary co-operations, rather than a training / capacity-enhancement workshop (though there are bound to be training benefits as well). We have clarified Activity 2.1, paragraph 25, page G-8.107 in response to this.

*South Africa, Paragraph 44*

**Issue 38:** The Reviewer suggests that the 10% increase in tourist numbers is a modest target for the duration of the project.

**Response 38:** This is true. However, in the logframe greater clarity is given to this figure; there it is stated that the 10% increase will take place over the six months following completion of the enhancements proposed under this objective when compared to the previous year. We have clarified the presentation of this figure in the text accordingly, both in the wording of the sub-objective and paragraph 15.

*Tanzania, Paragraph 45*

**Issue 39:** The Reviewer suggests that as part of the activities outlined in Activity 4.4, the centre could be incorporated into the activities of local tour operators to generate revenue. Furthermore it is suggested that there will be recurrent costs for travel, reprinting of materials and holding events that will need to be met (paragraph 30 is referred to).

**Response 39:** We agree that involving local tour operators is a good idea. Local entrepreneurs were involved in the development of the proposal through the stakeholder workshops. They are therefore fully apprised of the development and will be involved in similar ways as the Reviewer suggests. Regarding the suggestions for ongoing fundraising, it is indicated that the salary of a Fundraising Officer within WCST will be met from their core funds. One of the roles of this person will be to continue to raise funds to meet these types of recurrent cost. We have amended the paragraph to clarify the points raised by the Reviewer.

*Turkey, Paragraph 46*

**Issue 40:** The Reviewer queries the amount of work planned to take place in the project, suggesting that considerably more could be achieved in four years than only awareness raising. It is suggested that significant steps along the way to producing a Ramsar Management Plan could be taken.

**Response 40:** We feel that the comments provided by the STAP Reviewer do not fully reflect the extent to which preparations for a management plan will be developed. The Reviewer highlights Activities 3.3 and 4.1 which will undertake lobbying and review of existing reports and management plans for the site. However, Activity 4.2 is not mentioned; this will compile a socio-economic report for the site that will be a key document underpinning the development of the future management plan. Some preliminary survey work has also been undertaken at the site regarding the needs for preparation of a management plan. Collectively this means that by the end of the project the necessary resources and political will and processes will have been defined for development of a management plan to begin. We feel that this is a reasonable stage to have reached by the end of the project. Furthermore, the PDF-B Project Steering Committee endorsed this approach at the meeting in Senegal in September 2001 and so the proponents have followed this guidance in preparing this proposal. It should also be noted that the proposed duration of the project is 3.5 years and not 4 as the Reviewer suggests and this fits better with the size of the proposed work programme.

*Turkey, Paragraph 47*

**Issue 41:** The Reviewer queries the wisdom of basing a project officer in a location away from the Project site. It is suggested that it is inefficient and a waste of resources because the project is best served by a locally based person. The Reviewer recommends that any remotely based staff are only part-time.

**Response 41.** In addition to the overall Project Officer there is a locally based Project Officer who will live in the Municipality of Lake Burdur; this person will be full-time based at the site.

The role of the overall Project Officer will be to coordinate all project activities including those of locally based staff and to carry out the lobbying and government related roles. This person will not be full-time working on this project. He/she will be an existing employee of the project executing agency, who will be given responsibility to co-ordinate this project.

*Yemen, Paragraph 48*

**Issue 42:** The Reviewer highlights the fact that the endorsement of the management plan is outside the sphere of influence of the project and this is a decision taken by the government authorities. The Reviewer suggests an alternative wording for related sentences and headings in the proposal.

**Response 42:** Agreed. We have amended the proposal in line with this suggestion.

*Yemen, Paragraph 49*

**Issue 43:** The Reviewer highlights that in paragraph 31, Activity 3.2 little mention is made of consultations with World Bank staff working on the production of a master plan for Aden. It is suggested that these should be regular throughout the project to ensure synergy between the two initiatives.

**Issue 43:** Agreed. It is an oversight that reference was not made to regular meetings in paragraph 31 and we have amended the proposal accordingly.

*Yemen, Paragraph 50*

**Issue 44:** The Reviewer queries where co-financing is coming from, because the amount indicated is insufficient to cover the project's needs.

**Response 44:** At the time of writing the proposal co-financing was not yet raised in its entirety and therefore not stated in the proposal. Efforts have been ongoing to secure this. We are confident that by project inception the funding gap will have been met.

#### **A.iv Feasibility of implementation, operation and maintenance**

*Paragraphs 51-52*

**Issue 45:** The Reviewer lists the risks identified in the proposal and identifies two more for adding to the list that correspond to Government commitment for migratory waterbird issues (as expressed through AEWA membership) and project delays causing loss of co-funding/opportunities to link with other initiatives.

**Response 45:** Government commitment: We do not agree with this point. The commitment of governments to AEWA and this project is very strongly evidenced by the rapidly increasing membership of AEWA and by the endorsement of the MoP and CoP of the AEWA and Ramsar MEAs.

Project delays: We accept that problems with co-financing and linkages to other projects may cause problems. However, we would anticipate that the more likely cause of these would be policy changes in donor organisations and other initiatives than GEF project delays in themselves. Once the project is initiated there will be full-time PCU coordinating and managing the project with the objective to keep the project on time. Paragraph 72 has been amended to reflect this; it has been addressed at the same time as Issue 15.

#### **B.v Replicability of the project**

*Paragraph 62*

**Issue 46:** The Reviewer lists three bullets that may hinder replicability of the project; 1. limited cooperation between the various sub-regional centres; 2. inadequate and untimely co-funding; 3. insufficient funding for exchange programmes.

**Response 46:** We feel that whilst these are good points, the project has been designed to prevent these potential problems. Cooperation between the sub-regional project centres will be facilitated by and in some instances through the PCU. One of the tasks of this Unit will be to ensure that just such cooperation takes place in order to ensure that flyway scale objectives are met. Co-funding has been carefully costed during the project development phase and 5% contingency included. As noted above in Response 45, there

may be problems of untimely co-funding, but we feel the correct amounts will be available. We accept that funding for the exchange programmes may be inadequate, however, these programmes will be designed carefully in collaboration with potential donors, so that budgets are not over-estimated and the chances of securing funds are maximised.

#### **C.iv Degree of involvement of stakeholders**

##### *Paragraph 76*

**Issue 47:** The Reviewer refers to an emphasis in the project design and implementation methodologies on stakeholder consultation rather than active involvement and to under-representation of governments in the Project Steering Committee.

**Response 47:** The project involves a great variety of stakeholders at different levels. Where feasible they have been actively included in areas such as the design of the training and awareness raising activities and all demonstration site activities. Once the generic and sub-regional training and awareness raising programmes have been developed, the courses and workshops will be developed activity and collaboratively with stakeholders. Also, trainers will be trained through the programmes to take on these roles. Similarly the sub-regional project centres and exchange programme will use seconded staff from stakeholder organisations, providing an active role in design and implementation. The project's aim is that capacity developed in these individuals can then be transferred to institutions during and after the project.

The involvement of the Project Steering Committee has already been discussed above in Response 18; there it is highlighted that there will strong, active involvement of stakeholders.

#### **D. Minor changes suggested for improvement of the Flyways proposal**

##### *Paragraphs 81-89*

We would like to thank the Reviewer for raising these issues and we have addressed all of them accordingly.

## WI Response to STAP – Supplementary Review of GEF Investment Project Proposal

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**Project Title:** Enhancing conservation of the critical network of sites required by Migratory Waterbirds on the African/Eurasian Flyways  
Date: 02 September 2003  
**UNEP contact:** Mark Zimsky, Senior Programme Officer / Biodiversity, UNEP Division of GEF Coordination, Nairobi, [mark.zimsky@unep.org](mailto:mark.zimsky@unep.org)

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### RESPONSES

#### Section A. Key Issues

##### **a.i Scientific and technical soundness of the changes to the original GEF Project Brief and how the redesign impacts the overall soundness of the project (if at all).**

Re i): We confirm the Reviewer's interpretation of the effect of the removal of Outcome 1.5 from the proposal. It is indeed not critical for the implementation of the site network and management planning tool that Wetland Directories are developed.

##### *Paragraph 93*

**Issue 48** Re. ii) The Reviewer is correct in *Paragraph 92* identifying Component 2 as being the most significantly affected by the reduction in co-financing. The principal effects are:

- The reduction in funding to develop the sub-regional training and awareness programmes;
- The removal of Outcome 2.3 to implement them;
- The removal of the sub-regional project centres to coordinate and implement them.

The new strategy proposes to mobilise resources during the project in a process lead by governments in the sub-regions in order to facilitate the implementation of the sub-regionally focused training and awareness programmes. The reviewer identifies potential risks in this strategy that could lead to delayed implementation or even failure to implement them during the implementation phase of the overall GEF project. We agree that these are risks inherent in this approach. However, we have cause for optimism in raising the necessary funds and believe that the strategy for development of the Programmes will help to lower this risk. We feel the following are key points:

- In the West (Central) African sub-region, the French government is already involved in the development of a Francophone wetland training programme. Funds allocated for development of this Programme are to be used as co-financing for this project and it is envisaged that future funds will also be leveraged from the French government to help implementation during the GEF project. Furthermore, this initiative was requested by a number of Francophone African countries at the last Ramsar CoP and these countries have already committed financing to developing this initiative to its current stage. It is anticipated that they will continue to support the initiative providing further co-financing.
- Proposals for funding that would help in the implementation of the Programmes are already under development. Wetlands International have submitted a proposal to the Dutch government to assist funding of the implementation of these Programmes. A decision is expected to be announced by mid-October 2003. Wetlands International is in the early stages of developing a proposal collaboratively with a Danish Consultancy, to be submitted to DANIDA that would be suitable as co-finance for the implementation of parts of the sub-regional Programmes.
- There is existing international commitment for the development and implementation of training activities supportive of wetland management and conservation that coincide with the objectives of the Programmes to be developed in the GEF project. At the Ramsar CoP8, the Contracting Parties adopted the Strategic Action Plan under Resolution VIII.25 in which “Operational Objective 20. Training” specifies a number of actions that are implemented by the GEF project and by the Programmes it would develop. Furthermore, Resolution VIII.41 addresses the “Establishment of a Regional Ramsar Centre for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia”. The Iranian government have offered to establish this centre. This suggests that there is strong interest in the Central Asian region to establish such a training initiative and that there may be strong possibilities to develop implementation strategies collaboratively.
- The strategy to engage governments in the sub-regional training boards, thus allowing them to lead and oversee development of the programmes is designed to ensure that they are owners of the process from the outset. This will enable them to develop Programmes which meet their requirements in terms of content and whose financial requirements for implementation can be realistically met. It will also serve to develop a strong and effective government level group of stakeholders to approach donors.
- It will be the role of the PCU and the Project Steering Committee to monitor and evaluate the development and operation of the sub-regional training boards to ensure that engagement of sub-regional stakeholders is deemed sufficient to ensure a high likelihood of success in implementation. This will be monitored through minutes of their meetings and standard reporting from sub-regional subcontractors.

**Response 48:** We agree with the reviewer that the risks are not adequately highlighted in the proposal. Therefore we suggest the inclusion of this additional information in the proposal to demonstrate that the risks are lower and that there is a sensible strategy in place to minimise these risks. We therefore propose to amend the proposal along the following lines:

- Add a paragraph to the Project Brief under the “Risks” section, inserted between current paragraph numbers 69-70. This will summarise the information in the bullet points above.
- Highlight the risks of delayed implementation in the Project logframe;
- Amend the title of Component 2 to “Establishing a basis for strengthening decision-making and technical capacity for wetland and migratory waterbird conservation”.

*Paragraph 95*

**Issue 49:** Re. iv) The reviewer highlights the reduced costs for Outcome 2.2 and questions whether this might compromise the quality of the products that result.

**Response 49:** To properly evaluate the effects of the cuts on quality, the exact nature of the cuts made to the budget must be understood:

- The original proposal included the costs of developing courses and modules in all sub-regions, which amounted to nearly 50% of the total cost of this outcome. This has been cut from Outcome 2.2. Only the Programmes themselves will be developed. It will be the responsibility of the Project and sub-regional stakeholders to raise funds for the development of specific modules prior to implementation. This is not funded in the revised proposal; against the background of reduced co-financing it seemed a better strategy to secure financing once the Programme had been agreed by stakeholders.
- In the original proposal, costs under Outcome 2.2 included funding for five years of sub-regional training board meetings, including exchange visits for two board members in each sub-region. Funding is now provided for two years of meetings and exchange visits have been cut. Further funding of meetings and activities will need to be raised by the sub-regional stakeholders. It is expected that since these agencies will have committed themselves to the process of Programme development and implementation this co-financing should be easily raised.
- Establishment and staffing of the sub-regional project centres was included in the original proposal. Again, this has been cut against the background of reduced funding because the need for these centres was for development of modules and implementation of the programme. This will not be necessary in the revised GEF project.

It is estimated that these cuts remove approximately \$2.1m from the original budget without affecting the development of Programmes. The remaining savings have been achieved as a result of the shortened schedule for activities and reallocation of funds for development of a sustainability strategy during implementation to resource mobilisation

during the development of the Programmes. Therefore we feel that there is relatively little threat to the quality of the outputs that remain in this Outcome. In addition it is anticipated that through the commitment of sub-regional stakeholders to the process of Programme development, further co-financing will be levered during the project.

**a.ii Highlight positive and negative impacts of the redesign on the overall project.**

*Paragraph 97*

**Issue 50:** The reviewer highlights four negative impacts of the redesign

**Response 50:** We address each of the negative impacts in turn below:

- Removal of Outcome 1.5. It is stated that removing Outcome 1.5 is moderately negative. We would highlight the Reviewer's comment that their production is not critical for project success. Omitting this outcome will reduce the range of the project's outputs, but will not affect the quality of the main output from this Component; the development of the critical site network management tool.
- Risk of failure of Training and Awareness Programme implementation. We agree (above) that there is a risk that there will not be a significant increase in capacity if the Programmes are not implemented. However, we feel that this risk can be minimised through careful management and monitoring of the situation. Also, international commitments to develop and implement training, added to initiatives that are (currently) being developed to raise financing will further reduce this risk.
- Quality of outputs arising from Outcome 2.2. The cuts in budget have largely not been directed at this part of the Outcome but at other activities that were included in the first version and related to the longer term implementation of the Programmes. We do not feel that quality of the programmes will be compromised.
- Halving of the budget of the exchange programme. We concur with the Reviewer's analysis that the reduced funding should serve to increase the active involvement of the relevant agencies. Although immediate availability of co-financing has necessitated a reduction in the funding available for the implementation of the exchanges programme, sufficient funds remain to ensure that additional funding can be actively pursued to ensure the programmes longer term success.

**a.iii Replicability and sustainability of the changes to the Project Brief (added value for the global environment beyond the project itself).**

*Paragraph 100*

**Issue 51:** The reviewer expresses concern that the Sub-regional Training Boards may not be suitably designed to ensure sustainability and continuation beyond the life of the project. Particular concerns are that they are too loosely designed (practical fora versus more organised bureaucratic Boards) and too NGO driven.

**Response 51:** We feel that the commitment of governments through international instruments such as the Ramsar Convention and the evidence (provided above in this response) of the some of the sub-regions’ interest to develop training initiatives will ensure that government commitment will be high to continue and sustain this initiative. However, we do accept that the organisation of the Sub-Regional Training Boards does not present a clear structure to assist this. We would therefore propose to amend the proposal in the Project Brief and Annexes I and F in line with the following points:

- The Sub-Regional Training Boards will be chaired by a sub-regional governmental agency active in the delivery of wetland and waterbird related training activities
- The Government agencies to be involved in the Sub-Regional Training Boards will be asked to sign a letter of commitment stating their commitment to the development of the Programme and helping to establish its implementation.
- The exact composition of the Sub-Regional Training Boards will be established through consultation in each sub-region by the sub-regional Capacity Development Officer. They will be comprised of a combination of sub-regional government agencies and sub-regional representatives of the Ramsar Convention Bureau, UNEP/AEWA Secretariat, BirdLife International and Wetlands International. Sub-regionally based NGOs with a specific involvement in wetland and waterbird related training will also be invited. The Board will comprise a maximum of 12 members.

*Paragraph 101*

**Issue 52:** The reviewer highlights that it is unclear which agency will be responsible for fund-raising for the training and awareness raising Programmes.

**Response 52:** We agree that this needs to be rectified and will amend the proposal. We propose adding the following paragraph to the “Sustainability” section of the Project Brief, beneath para 74:

“Resource mobilisation for the implementation of the Training and Awareness Raising Programmes to be developed in Outcome 2.2 will be an integral part of the sustainability strategy. Funds will be raised over the two year development phase of each of the sub-regional Programmes by a combination of Project and sub-regional stakeholder agencies. Funds will be provided by the project to assist this. The partnership required to carry out this work will vary from sub-region to sub-region. The Sub-Regional Training Boards will establish a strategy for resource mobilisation that will be developed in relation to the specific funding needs of each region that will be established from the Programme they develop. The strategy will include a number of donors that will be targeted and allocation of responsibilities in the Project partnership for approaching them. In general it is envisaged that there will be two levels of resource mobilisation. At the flyway scale the project partnership will be involved in approaching major donors external to the sub-region under guidance from the Training Boards. Wetlands International and BirdLife International will implement this work whilst receiving such advice and assistance as the UNEP/AEWA Secretariat and the Ramsar

Convention Bureau can provide. At the sub-regional scale the subcontractor organisations will approach sub-regionally based donors under supervision of the Board.”