



**Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species
of Wild Animals**



**FIRST MEETING OF THE SIGNATORY STATES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING CONSERVATION MEASURES FOR THE
AQUATIC WARBLER (*Acrocephalus paludicola*)**

*Lower Oder Valley National Park, Criewen, Germany
25-27 June 2006*

CMS/AW-1/Report
Annex 7

PRIORITY PROJECTS LIST

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

Note by the CMS Secretariat

1. Pursuant to paragraph 2 of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), Signatories are to implement the provisions of the Action Plan as a basis for conserving all populations of the species.
2. The purpose of the Priority Projects List is to coordinate conservation activities in some areas of high conservation concern that still require urgent intervention. The list is designed to assist in focusing limited international, national and other funds for the most immediate conservation impact. It will also form the basis for targeted fundraising campaigns nationally and internationally.
3. The Priority Projects List has been endorsed by the First Meeting of the Signatory States to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (Criewen, 2006).
4. The activities presented in the list will implement “high priority” action points within the Action Plan. However, the activities have been further prioritised depending on the threats targeted and other conservation needs. A column on financial considerations is provided, but exact figures have not been indicated pending further development of the project concepts. Funding would be secured through funding applications prepared by lead countries and collaborators.
5. The primary responsibility for developing and implementing the listed projects will rest with the lead country governments, as well as each country’s non-governmental community and its individual Aquatic Warbler experts. Relevant intergovernmental, international and national organisations would be invited to consider collaborating on the projects themselves. The MoU’s International Aquatic Warbler Flyway Coordinator (AWCO) would provide technical and other support on request to support the project development and implementation processes.
6. The Priority Projects List will be updated on a rolling basis and circulated by the AWCO, in consultation with the CMS Secretariat, to reflect updated information such as funding secured to implement a particular project. Between regular meetings of the MoU Signatories new project priorities would be added to the list in consultation with the MoU focal point of the targeted country.

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

*Endorsed by the First Meeting of the Signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler
(Acrocephalus paludicola), Criewen, Germany, 25-27 June 2006*

(as at July 2006)

Project Title	Rationale	Other Range States Involved	Action Plan Target	Priority	Est. Cost	Comments
1.0 Breeding Range						
Belarus						
1.1 Implementation of urgent conservation actions at key AW breeding sites in Belarus	Management plans for three largest Belarus sites have been compiled and require constant habitat management to be implemented		2.4	Very high	€€€' €€€	To supplement the existing GEF Polesie project
1.2 Restoring valuable habitats for globally threatened species – management planning and implementation of conservation actions at degraded or abandoned AW breeding sites	Many sites have been abandoned because of habitat fragmentation, vegetation succession, etc. A network of breeding sites should be recreated in order to ensure stability of the species		2.4.1	High	€€€' €€€	
1.3 Modelling distribution of globally threatened species confined to non-forest ecosystems by satellite image analysis - mapping potential AW breeding sites in Belarus, Russia, Ukraine	Identification of potential AW breeding sites by remote sensing can significantly decrease resources needed for ground verification	UKR, RUS	3.1.2	Moderate	€€€' €€€	
Germany						
1.4 Implementation of conservation measures in Lower Oder Valley National Park according to the research results on key AW habitat requirements	German AW population is critically endangered	POL	2.1 & 2.2	Very high	€€€' €€€	Follow up activity to the existing research project funded by DBU
Latvia						
1.5 Implementation of conservation measures at key AW breeding sites in Lake Lijepaja	All AW breeding sites in the Baltic region are threatened because of abandonment	LVA, RUS (Kaliningrad)	2.1 & 2.2	High	€€€' €€€	

Project Title	Rationale	Other Range States Involved	Action Plan Target	Priority	Est. Cost	Comments
Lithuania						
1.6 Implementation of conservation measures at key AW breeding sites in Curonian lagoon and Zuvintas biosphere reserve	All AW breeding sites in the Baltic region are threatened by abandonment	LVA, RUS (Kaliningrad)	2.1 & 2.2	High	€€€' €€€	
Poland						
1.7 Conservation actions at the Lublin marshes and the Narew floodplain	Lublin marshes are the second largest AW breeding site in Poland and the EU, supporting up to 600 vocalizing males	BLR (Narew)	2.1 & 2.2	High	€€€' €€€	
1.8 Inventory of all small breeding sites	Small sites could be important for the recovery of the population	UKR, BEL	3.1.2	High POL – very high Very high (POL)	€€€' €€€	Focus would be on sites thought to have been lost 10 years ago due to abandonment and succession; There are possibilities to obtain EU funds for conservation
1.9 Identification, restoration plan development and restoration of potential/former AW breeding sites in Pomerania	A network of breeding sites for the endangered Pomeranian population of the AW must be re-established	GER	2.4.1	Very high	€€€' €€€	
Russia						
1.10 Identify and ground survey potential AW breeding sites in European Russia	So far, no stable AW breeding sites in European Russia have been identified despite suitable habitat conditions		A.P. 2.1.1	High	€€€' €€€	Initially in the course of the annual activities / field meetings of the Aquatic Warbler Conservation Team (AWCT)
Ukraine						
1.11 Management planning (including full environmental impact assessment of economic development activities) and implementation of urgent conservation actions at key AW breeding sites in Pripyat and Desna-Dniepr floodplains	The project is aimed at developing and implementing priority conservation actions at AW breeding sites in Ukraine, where active conservation has not yet taken place		2.2	Very high	€€€' €€€	Project on management planning for Desna-Dniepr population has been submitted to SEPS Ukraine (British Council)

Project Title	Rationale	Other Range States Involved	Action Plan Target	Priority	Est. Cost	Comments
1.12 DNA sampling of small AW population in Western Ukraine (near the Polish border) to determine inbreeding depression	There are signs of inbreeding depression in neighbouring Lublin population		3.1	Moderate	€€€' €€€	Concerns Chornoguzka Valley and Lakes Beloje and Pesochnoje
1.13 Finalization and approval of AW National Species Action Plans	National Species Action Plans are essential for AW conservation	BLR, POL, UKR	1.1	Moderate	€€€' €€€	For POL – National Species Action Plan is under development
2.0 Migration						
2.1 Inventory of European/African (Morocco, Mauritania) migration sites – their protection status and conservation situation	Detrimental developments at important migration stopovers of the AW currently pose a serious threat to the species; wintering sites may be threatened by demographic pressures and habitat modifications	All countries within migration range	2.3.1; 3.1.3 & 3.1.5	Very high	€€€' €€€	Desk study and site visits.
2.2 Synopsis and analysis of all existing AW ringing and recovery data	Analysis of ringing and recovery data will provide more information on migration pattern and strategy and is important to develop population models	All AW range states	3.1.3 & 3.1.4	Very high	€€€' €€€	Negative results also important; Observations should be included; Contact all ringing centres and rarity committees; Where possible – information of capture methods and habitat should be collected
2.3 Balkan Flyway of the AW – research and conservation	There are hints that there could exist another flyway of the Aquatic Warbler	UKR, BGR	3.1.3 & 3.1.5	Moderate	€€€' €€€	
3.0 Wintering Range						
3.1 Desk study (satellite image analysis) of known and potential AW wintering sites in Africa	Application of remote sensing techniques can help further narrow down potential AW wintering areas or find similar sites once AW wintering has been confirmed.	All countries within wintering range	3.1.4 & 3.1.5	Very high	€€€' €€€	
3.2 Ground check potential AW wintering sites in West Africa	It is crucial to identify wintering sites in order to identify potential threats and bottlenecks	SEN, MRT, MLI	3.1.4	Very high	€€€' €€€	AWCT 2007 expedition to West Africa, starting from Senegal to develop a standardised methodology; Using mist-netting and tape

Project Title	Rationale	Other Range States Involved	Action Plan Target	Priority	Est. Cost	Comments
						lures; opportunities exist for capacity building in wintering countries
3.3 Review of protection status and conservation situation of identified AW wintering sites in Africa	Detrimental developments at important wintering sites of the AW are one of the most serious threats to the AW	MRT, SEN, MLI, GNB	2.3.1	Very high	€€€' €€€	Conditioned by successful implementation of 3.1
3.4 Develop management plans and implement urgent conservation measures for identified African wintering areas and migration stop-over sites	Once identified, major migration stopovers and wintering sites need to be appropriately managed	MLI, MRT, SEN	3.1.4 & 3.1.5	Very high	€€€' €€€	Conditioned by successful implementation of 3.1
4.0 General						
4.1 Second Meeting of Signatories (2009)	Signatories meetings should be conducted regularly pursuant to MoU paragraph 3 to assess the implementation of the MoU and the Action Plan	All Signatories		High	€€€' €€€	Proposed to take place in Poland during the LIFE project meeting (2009); opportunities may exist for collaboration with Lithuania (e.g., AW scientific symposium, excursion, etc.)
4.2 AWCT support for annual research work	BirdLife International Aquatic Warbler Conservation Team is taking the lead in research and conservation of the AW	All Signatories	3.1 & 4.1	High	€€€' €€€	
4.3 AW small grants for monitoring, pilot conservation and action plans	Small grants are a very cost-effective method of stimulating research and conservation	All Signatories	3.1 & 3.2	High	€€€' €€€	
4.4 BirdLife/CMS International Aquatic Warbler Conservation Officer (AWCO)	AWCO provides assistance to the CMS Secretariat, BirdLife International and national conservation organizations to support implementation of the Aquatic Warbler MoU	All Signatories	4.1	Very high	€€€' €€€	Funding for interim MoU coordination and other AW activities expires at the end of 2006. Stable multi-year funding sought.