
Specialist Groups Terms of Reference

(referred to as PAPER 4 in November 2000 Workshop)

Introduction

The terms of reference listed here are those agreed in 1998 and confirmed by the Board of Directors in November 1998. They have not been subsequently reviewed, however, thematic and task-based working would require a strategic framework to be provided and agreed with Wetlands International and its partners, against which forward plans would be tested

1. General Activities of Specialist Groups

Some of the tasks listed below are essential if a group is to be able to help deliver the role for which Wetlands International has such groups. Those activities highlighted in **bold** are those now recommended as essential for all groups; those in *italics* are identified as priorities during the next triennium. The ability of SGs to deliver other tasks depends on the level of development of the group, but should be targets included in a group's capacity development, particularly since they will help the groups develop, expand their operations and/or become better resourced.

a. prepare a strategic plan for group development and implementation.

b. produce triennial report to the Board meeting summarising group activities; and produce annual reports to the Science Co-ordinator.

c. develop a core network of members willing to contribute advice and expertise, and maintain a register of identified expertise of members, accessible to the group and to Wetlands International.

identify a Co-ordinator with global responsibility for maintaining the link with Wetlands International.

e. develop a regional structure, appointing regional co-ordinators to provide more direct links with Wetlands International regional HQs.

f. appoint Assistant Co-ordinators or Task Forces (by agreement with Wetlands International) to undertake particular group activities and projects or lead on specific projects.

g. (Co-ordinators) attend Board meetings (e.g. Senegal, Nov 1998) and other meetings/workshops (e.g. Wageningen, Jan 1998) as appropriate.

h. produce a newsletter (at least 1 per year), circulated to SG membership/other SG co-ordinators/Wetlands International HQs.

i. workshop/publications: hold workshops (at present no frequency suggested), and summarise results in publications.

- j. prepare articles/information for *Wetlands* newsletters and Web-sites.
- k. ensure Wetlands International and its activities are made known to the global scientific community (e.g. through newsletters and displays at meetings).
- l. provide specialist advice on the group's topic to Wetlands International offices and other parts of the specialist network.
- m. develop and undertake funded projects in association with Wetlands International ICU and regions.
- n. develop electronic communications capacity, both within the group and for external publicity e.g. by Web site development.
- o. assess costs/benefits from establishing a large membership network (cf a small core of experts), and how best to service it.

2. Additional tasks for waterbird groups

Waterbird SGs have existed for longer than the wetland groups and have some additional specific roles in providing input to Wetlands International projects, as follows. Some are inputs to AEME regional activities only at present.

- a. *Waterfowl Population Estimates*, 3rd edition. Provide new estimates (in association with database managers/waterbird officers) and comment on draft listings. Next activity needed late 1998/early 1999.
- b. *IWC global strategy*. Advise on proposals for future IWC operation.
- c. Develop species and taxon group Action Plans, in association with IUCN-SSC.
- d. Contribute to compilation of IUCN Red Lists.
- e. identify up to 20 of the core network for membership of IUCN-SSC through the Wetlands International 'Waterbird Network'
- f. *W Palearctic IWC Annual Report*. SGs (AEME only) to prepare short taxon chapters, in close collaboration with database managers (1998/9).
- g. Populations in decline (AEME only). Advise if declines are 'significant' against a set of rules being developed.

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