



## 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Sintra, Portugal, 19 – 21 March 2001

### Record of the Meeting

#### 1. Attendance

This is listed at Annex 1 to this Record.

#### 2. Opening Remarks

Mr. Peter Lina (Chair) opened the Meeting. He welcomed the participants and invited a representative of the host country (Portugal) to make opening remarks.

On behalf of the Portuguese Government that was hosting the Meeting, the Secretary of State for Territorial Planning and Nature Conservation, Dr. Manuel Silva Pereira, welcomed the delegates to the Advisory Committee Meeting. He expressed his gratitude to be hosting such an important event in the year of the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Agreement which was declared as the International Year of the Bat. He also expressed his hope for a successful Meeting. In particular the Secretary of State highlighted Portugal's conservation plan on cave-dwelling species which in his view fitted very well in the implementation of the Agreement.

The Chair expressed his thanks to the Portuguese Institute of Nature Conservation (ICN) for providing the excellent facilities and organising such an extraordinary field-trip the day before the Meeting.

The President of the ICN, Arq. Carlos Guerra, seconded the statement of the Secretary of State and expressed his very best wishes for the Meeting.

Mr. Andreas Streit (Executive Secretary) welcomed all the participants to the Meeting and expressed his pleasure to see delegates from 31 countries. He was particular happy to see Albania, Belarus and Yugoslavia being represented for the first time. He outlined the very active role of Portugal in the implementation of the Agreement and stressed on the exemplary role of the ICN in providing two full-time and further two temporary staff members for bat conservation within Portugal, effecting both the administrative and the field work. The Executive Secretary also

thanked the German Government for the voluntary contribution it provided to finance the participation of delegates and observers from countries with economies in transition.

### **3. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure**

The Rules of Procedure were adopted unanimously.

### **4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

Nominated by Moldova and seconded by Romania, France, Croatia and Sweden, Mr. Peter Lina (The Netherlands) was re-elected as Chair of the Advisory Committee unanimously.

Nominated by Germany and seconded by Romania, Poland and Finland, Ms. Luisa Rodrigues (Portugal) was re-elected as Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee unanimously.

### **5. Adoption of the Agenda**

The Agenda was adopted by consensus.

### **6. Approval of the minutes of the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee**

The minutes were approved. It was, however, recognised that the approval of the minutes of the previous Meeting would not be necessary in the future as long as the minutes were approved already at the Meeting itself.

### **7. Secretariat report:**

#### **a) Budget:**

The Executive Secretary drew the attention to the written report. He thanked the German Government, namely the Ministry for the Environment, Nature Protection and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) for the ongoing support of the Secretariat in Bonn. He also thanked the BMU for carrying out the audit free of charge.

The Executive Secretary was pleased to inform that in 2001 the contributions from Denmark, Germany, Luxembourg, Monaco and Norway already had been received and he reminded that all payments should be affected before the end of June of the financial year to which they relate. He recalled that in 2000 DEM 28,850.18 of earmarked voluntary contributions had been received to fund the participation of delegates from countries with economies in transition at the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee (contribution from Germany) and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the

Meeting of Parties (contributions from Germany, The Netherlands, the United Kingdom and UNEP/CMS).

**b) Staff changes**

The Executive Secretary informed the Committee that effective on 3 March 2000 the Administrative Assistant, Mr. Jens Lützen, had resigned from his post and thanked him for his excellent work. He reported that on 1 April 2000 the new Administrative Assistant, Ms. Christine Boye, had taken up her post and had already proved to be an outstanding replacement.

**c) National Reports and updates to National Reports**

Since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties National Reports or updates were received from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Czech Republic, Hungary, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia and the United Kingdom. Further reports were received during the Meeting from Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. The Executive Secretary drew the attention of the Committee to the updated Synthesis of National Implementation Reports distributed at the Meeting (Inf.EUROBATS.AC6.19).

**d) Agreement membership (recruitment of new Parties)**

The Executive Secretary was pleased to report that in 2000 Croatia and Romania and in 2001 Malta and Moldova had acceded to the Agreement. He expected the growth in membership to continue in 2001 with the accession of several more countries.

**e) Publicity (including International Year of the Bat)**

The Executive Secretary informed that the 4<sup>th</sup> European Bat Night had seen an again growing success in 28 countries and in 2001 particular efforts would be made to raise public awareness at the occasion of the International Year of the Bat.

**f) Special projects**

The Executive Secretary informed the Committee about a draft GEF PDF-A project proposal on the "Identification of gaps in the management of habitats along the flyway of migratory mammals in Eastern Europe". This project proposal was the result of an initiative from Bulgaria and developed with substantial assistance of the delegate of Moldova, Ms. Angela Sochirca. He expressed his hope that the project proposal would be approved by UNEP/GEF in 2001.

The Executive Secretary was also happy to report that a substantial voluntary contribution related to the International Year of the Bat was expected from the

Government of Belgium and the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. He informed that this earmarked contribution was intended for the production of a series of seven leaflets for public awareness on Bat Conservation in Eastern and South-Eastern European countries.

## **8. Administrative matters:**

### **a) Organisational arrangements for the Secretariat since 1 January 2001**

The Executive Secretary reported about the ongoing excellent working relationships with the UNEP/CMS, AEWA and ASCOBANS Secretariats and that effective on 1 January 2001 the UNEP/CMS Agreements Unit was established according to Resolution 3.1. He also reported that the recruitment procedures for the Secretariat staff were not yet completed and that the staff members at present were working on the basis of fixed-term contracts until the end of May.

The Parties expressed their concerns about the delays which had occurred in the recruitment and other administrative matters important for the well-functioning of the Secretariat. The Parties furthermore expressed their hope that these delays were only of a transitional nature.

### **b) Audit Report**

The Executive Secretary presented the Audit Report for the financial year 2000. The report was approved.

### **c) UN scale of contributions for the year 2001 – 2003**

The Executive Secretary presented the recalculated contributions of Parties to the Agreement based on the newly adopted UN scale of contributions. The Parties recognised that the differences resulting out of the new scales should be consolidated with the invoices for the contributions for 2002 in accordance with Resolution 3.2.

## **9. Other presentations of Parties and Non-Party Range States**

All countries present reported about their activities within the European Bat Night as well as the International Year of the Bat and other projects related to bat conservation and research projects. The Non-Party Range States present also reported on their progress in acceding to the Agreement. The Executive Secretary confirmed to provide all necessary assistance in the procedure of acceding to the Agreement.

## **10. Bern Convention Species Action Plans**

The role of EUROBATS in the implementation of the European Species Action Plans commissioned by the Bern Convention for *Myotis dasycneme* and *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* was discussed. It was proposed that the Secretariat and a representative of the IUCN/SSC Chiroptera Specialist Group should discuss implementation procedures with the Bern Convention. Inf.EUROBATS.AC6.27 identified actions in the Action Plan summaries (for both species) that are already being developed by EUROBATS and suggested additionally that EUROBATS should:

1. ask Range States to identify separately in their national implementation reports their activities under the plans;
2. use activities of the Conservation and Management Plan and Transboundary Project – Underground Habitats to assist in setting criteria for site assessment;
3. initiate prioritisation of research through its Resolution on Priority Species for Autecological Studies;
4. co-ordinate monitoring data through its Species Monitoring initiative.

## **11. Report of the Intersessional Working Groups (IWGs) on Consistent Monitoring Methodologies (Resolution 2.2) and on a Database of Monitoring Results**

Following useful discussion in the plenary on Doc.EUROBATS.AC6.9, the working groups will prepare a form for registration of existing projects on bat population monitoring and will circulate a questionnaire to establish more clearly the requirements of such a database and the level of data that Range States can contribute. As a priority it will concentrate on those species identified in section 2 of the Conservation and Management Plan 2000 - 2003. It will consider GROMS and other possibilities for establishing the required database. Both groups will present a joint report in the next Meeting of the Advisory Committee.

## **12. Report of the IWG on the Transboundary programme - habitats: Data compilation**

As the Working Group had yet received few data for consideration, an open discussion was held to clarify the objectives, data requirements and timetable for the work. Following the meeting, further clarification of the data requirements and a data template will be transmitted to all Range States. According to Resolution 2.4, the lists of internationally important underground habitats should be completed by the end of 2001, so Range States are urged to submit their lists by the end of

September 2001. A report of the work will be presented to the next Meeting of the Advisory Committee.

### **13. Report of the IWG on the Transboundary programme - habitats: Forest practices**

Taking into consideration that none of the members of the previously established Intersessional Working Group were present and had not been in a position to progress in their work the Committee deemed appropriate to establish a new Intersessional Working Group (Dr. Peter Boye as convenor, Dr. Nikola Trvtkovic, Dr. Johnny de Jong, Ms. Maria João Pereira, Ms. Ana Rainho, Ms. Gillie Sargent and Dr. Andriy-Taras Bashta, see Annex 2). The group aims to propose a draft Resolution for the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties, inviting Parties to implement guidelines for forest management in accordance with bat conservation requirements and the Conservation and Management Plan 2000-2003 (Doc.EUROBATS.MOP3.14.Annex1.Rev1). The Group will gather information required for steps 1 and 2 (national) of Resolution 2.4 (Doc.EUROBATS.MOP2.7. AnnexII fin) and elaborate on appropriate procedures to meet steps 3 and 4 (international) of the same Resolution.

### **14. Report of the IWG on the Geographical scope of the Agreement: Migration routes**

The convenor presented a new version of the written report.

It was stressed that some contributions were still outstanding and that the report should be carefully reviewed. It was agreed that all countries should send their data and comments to the Working Group by the end of September. However, Germany will be unable to provide complete bat-ringing results before spring 2003.

Due to the increased number of participating countries it was decided to circulate the questionnaire again for completion by those experts who had not yet the occasion to do so.

Taking into consideration that with the amendment to the Agreement adopted at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties, seven more species are now covered (*Rousettus egyptiacus*, *Taphozous nudiventris*, *Barbastella leucomelas*, *Eptesicus bottae*, *Myotis schaubi*, *Otonycteris hemprichii*, and *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*<sup>1</sup>), it is necessary to prepare accounts and maps for these species. The delegates were

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<sup>1</sup> The nomenclature is awaiting confirmation from the ICZN.

asked to send information about these species, and to inform the Working Group about contacts of other biologists that may have other information.

The Working Group would present an updated version of the report at the next Meeting of the Advisory Committee.

## **15. Reports of the IWGs on the Bat Conservation and Management Plan:**

### **a) Report of the IWG on the Review of the list of Priority Species**

The Working Group has reviewed the list of species agreed at the 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee and recommends that the existing list remains with the addition of *Myotis schaubi*, *Nyctalus leisleri* and *Rhinolophus blasii* for reasons given in Doc.EUROBATS.AC6.16. Noting the fact that there were two groups working on Action 8 of Resolution 2.8 (although on different topics) it was decided to merge both groups.

### **b) Action 8 of Resolution 2.8 (Priorities for Autecological Studies)**

As agreed at the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee, the Working Group was requested to gather and circulate further information on some species of the Mediterranean region. The first step was to provide a list of references for each of the seven species in order to identify the major gaps of knowledge. Unfortunately only three lists were available before this meeting. Members of this group were requested to make a special effort to produce the missing lists quickly. The Working Group took the opportunity to meet in order to define the format of the lists and how they will be circulated during the intersessional period. The Working Group would present a report at the next Meeting of the Advisory Committee.

### **c) Action 17 of Resolution 2.8 (Foraging habitats and land management)**

The Working Group was requested to assist the Secretariat to collect, analyse and summarise existing information about advice given to land managers in the management of foraging habitats and make the information available to Range States. A summary of the answers to the questionnaire sent by 1999 has already been presented to the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee (Doc.EUROBATS.AC5.12b). So most of the information is available. Having completed its task the group was dissolved.

The Secretariat should be provided with copies of leaflets on this subject such as the Swedish one. It was agreed to scan the first page of these documents to make them accessible on the EUROBATS website if copyright laws would allow this.

Sweden offered to give assistance in clarifying this. Then the Secretariat could send copies of this material on request.

**d) Action 20 of Resolution 2.8 (Building Industry Awareness)**

The Working Group received publications and leaflets on successful practice from some Range States. These documents are now available at the Secretariat which was requested to scan the coverpage of each document and to present them on the EUROBATS website. On request, the Secretariat should be able to supply copies. The Range States were requested to provide the Secretariat with missing and new documents on this matter. Having completed its task the group was dissolved.

**e) Action 22 of Resolution 2.8 (Remedial Timber Treatment)**

Completed questionnaires have now been received from 14 Range States and a short interim report was presented to the Meeting. The remaining Range States were urged to return their completed questionnaires by the end of September 2001. Once the collection of data is complete, the Working Group will prepare a report for consideration by the next Meeting of the Advisory Committee.

**f) Report of the IWG on the Establishment of the Bat Conservation and Management Plan for 2000 – 2003**

Since the task of the IWG was to prepare a draft Resolution on the implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan for the years 2000 – 2003 this was completed by the adoption of Resolution 3.8. Therefore the group was dissolved.

**16. Future operation of the Advisory Committee and the Intersessional Working Groups**

The Committee agreed that future Meetings should take place on three full days allowing sufficient time for IWGs to plan their activities for the following and to provide the Secretariat with sufficient time to prepare the Record of the Meeting.

Due to the fact that many items treated by the IWGs are overlapping, it was highlighted that an increased exchange of information was necessary to contribute to the progress of the work programme.

The Secretariat was given the task to identify the actions to be taken after the Meetings of the Advisory Committee and communicate them to all members of the Committee and experts involved.

It was agreed to establish an additional IWG (Ms. Eva Suchomelova as convenor, Mr. Tony Hutson and Dr. Torsten Stjernberg, see Annex 2) to point out all the actions that are still to be implemented by the Parties.

## **17. Guidelines for the issue of permits for Bat Ringing activities**

In order to implement Resolution 3.4 the Working Group established at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties submitted a draft questionnaire to the Advisory Committee. The Committee confirmed the group already established (see Annex 2). The IWG was requested to prepare a draft Resolution on guidelines for the issue of permits for bat-ringing or other marking activities for the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee to be considered for submission to the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the Meeting of Parties.

## **18. Venue of the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee**

Romania offered to host the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee, which was welcomed with much appreciation by the Meeting.

## **19. Any other business**

Upon request from France, the Executive Secretary confirmed that the official date of the 2001 European Bat Night would be again the last weekend of August (25/26 August).

On behalf of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) of the United Kingdom, Dr. Jessamy Battersby made a presentation on the UK National Bat Monitoring Programme, which had completed its first five years. Developed by the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and funded by the Department of the Environment, this programme covered 8 of the 16 species resident in the UK. Through a network of 1580 volunteers a variety of surveys were carried out across the UK each year. The programme had produced some important results including information on the sample sizes required to detect population changes of 25 and 50 percent over 25 years. Analyses of the results on Lesser horseshoe bat maternity colony counts suggested that populations were increasing in Wales but a longer run of data was required to confirm the trend. The future of the National Bat Monitoring Programme had been secured through a long-term partnership between the BCT and the JNCC, the latter providing the core funding.

France informed the participants about the 9<sup>th</sup> European Bat Research Symposium to be held from 26 to 30 August 2002 in Le Havre, France, and a bat detector workshop in the week before.

Poland announced that the proceedings of the 8<sup>th</sup> European Bat Research Symposium would be published in the close future and invited for further contributions.

The Executive Secretary presented the logo for the International Year of the Bat and raised the question, if it should be also used as official logo for the Agreement in the future. Some Parties expressed their concerns about changing the well-established existing logo. It was decided to discuss this matter again at the next meeting of the Committee. Nevertheless it was agreed to use the new logo during the International Year of the Bat on the letterhead and on publications.

## **20. Adoption of the record of the Meeting**

The draft record was adopted with amendments.

## **21. Close of Meeting**

The United Kingdom expressed its gratitude towards the Portuguese hosts for the outstanding hospitality offered and the excellent organisation of the Meeting and also thanked the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Secretariat. All participants seconded this. The Executive Secretary also thanked the Portuguese hosts for their extraordinary support. The Chair explained that it was difficult to find the proper words to express gratitude towards the Portuguese hosts and the Secretariat for the excellent organisation of the Meeting. He also thanked the participants for their valuable contributions to carry forward the work of the Advisory Committee.

There being no further business, the Meeting was closed at 12.40 h.