

5th Session of the Meeting of Parties

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 4 - 6 September 2006

Record of the Meeting



1. Attendance

This is listed at **Annex 1** to this Record.

2. Opening remarks:

Mr. Peter Lina (The Netherlands), Chair of the Advisory Committee and acting Chair of the conference, opened the Meeting. He welcomed the participants and invited a representative of the host country (Slovenia) to make opening remarks.

On behalf of the Slovenian Government, Mr. Radovan Tavzes, Director General for the Ministry for Environment and Spatial Planning, welcomed the delegates to the meeting and expressed his pleasure that the 5th Session of the Meeting of Parties was being held in Slovenia. He also extended a warm welcome to the UNEP, UNON and UNEP/CMS representatives. He commented on the richness of biodiversity in Slovenia, which incorporates four biogeographical regions and noted the contribution of the EUROBATS Agreement to the Convention on Biological Diversity. He wished the delegates a successful and productive Meeting in contributing to nature conservation and bat conservation in particular.

Mr. Peter Lina thanked the Director General for his kind words and Slovenia for hosting the Meeting and also the organisers of the excellent field trip. He welcomed all delegates of Parties, Non-Party Range States and Non-Governmental Organisations. He thanked the Executive Secretary, Mr. Andreas Streit and his assistants, for organising the Meeting so successfully and also all the experts who had worked so hard to prepare the Meeting. He expressed a desire to improve pan-European conservation of bats and urged delegates to make wise decisions in the Meeting, because it was important for the implementation of the Agreement.

The Director of the UNEP Division of Environmental Conventions, Mr. Bakary Kante had sent a welcoming address on behalf of the UNEP Executive Director, Mr. Achim Steiner,

which was read by the UNEP representative, Ms. Elizabeth Mrema. The Executive Director sent his thanks to the Government of Slovenia for the kind invitation to host the Meeting and expressed his best wishes for a successful outcome. He stressed that UNEP commitment to the implementation of the EUROBATS Agreement was stronger than ever. He further noted that UNEP administrative support would continue to improve in the future (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.53).

On behalf of the Executive Secretary of UNEP/CMS, Mr. Robert Hepworth, Ms. Paola Deda read a message in which he expressed his thanks for the opportunity to address the Meeting on the 15th Anniversary of the signing of the Agreement. He sent his best wishes for the Meeting and noted that the continuing success of the Agreement could be measured in terms of the growing number of Parties. He further noted the fact that following the auditing process, the auditors had acknowledged that EUROBATS had been managed very effectively by the Secretariat (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.54.Rev.1).

Mr. Andreas Streit (Executive Secretary) thanked the Director General for providing excellent facilities for the Meeting, as well as such a beautiful excursion the day before, and expressed gratitude to Slovenia for hosting the Meeting. He welcomed the Secretariat to the Bern Convention. He further expressed thanks to all who had helped to prepare the Meeting, especially his excellent staff members and EUROBATS interns. He thanked the United Kingdom for provisions of a voluntary contribution to support delegates from countries with economies in transition and noted that the contribution had helped the Meeting to take place. He wished delegates to note that this Session of the Meeting of Parties was a special occasion, marking the 15th Anniversary of the conclusion of the Agreement and that there would be a special reception in celebration. He expressed hope that the good spirit of lively debate without confrontation that had been a long tradition of EUROBATS Meetings would continue throughout this Session of the Meeting of Parties. He also welcomed the Non-Governmental Organisations to the Meeting.

3. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

The Executive Secretary noted that the Rules of Procedure were the same as for the previous Session of the Meeting of Parties. Norway requested clarification of Rule 3 referring to credentials on who should be considered the proper authority for signing credentials. It was agreed that in future there would be a more detailed description on how credentials should be issued.

4. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The delegate from Macedonia proposed Mr. Peter Skoberne from Slovenia to be Chair of the Meeting. The nomination was seconded by the delegates from Croatia and the Ukraine and was carried by consensus.

The delegate from Sweden proposed Ms. Tuuli Lovén from Finland to be Vice-Chair, as Finland holds the EU Presidency. The nomination was seconded by Estonia and The Netherlands and was carried by consensus.

5. Adoption of the Agenda (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.1.Rev.2)

The Agenda was formally adopted without amendments by consensus.

6. Election of the Chairpersons of the Administrative and Scientific Working Groups

The delegate from Belgium proposed Ms. Luisa Rodrigues from Portugal to Chair the Administrative Working Group. The proposal was seconded by the UK and the Slovak Republic and carried by consensus.

The delegate from Sweden proposed Mr. Peter Lina from The Netherlands as Chair of the Scientific Working Group. The proposal was seconded by the UK and Macedonia and agreed by consensus.

7. Establishment of the Credentials Committee

The Chair noted the importance of this role for legal procedures and for the status of the Meeting. It was agreed by consensus that the UK, as Depositary for the Agreement, should Chair the Committee with Sweden, the Ukraine and Macedonia participating.

8. Admission of observers

The Meeting formally admitted all observers by consensus.

9. Welcoming addresses

Oral welcoming addresses were given by Germany, as the host country for the UNEP/CMS and its co-located Agreement Secretariats, the United Kingdom as Depositary (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.57) and from Finland on behalf of the European Union Member States and accession countries and candidate countries (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.55).

The delegate from Italy extended a warm greeting to everyone on the occasion of attending for the first time as a Party to the Agreement and noted the importance of EUROBATS for raising public awareness for the need for bat protection in Italy.

10. Report of the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Advisory Committee, Mr. Peter Lina, referred to the written Report (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.5). He drew attention to the successful outcomes of the bat rabies workshop, including Europe-wide acceptance of the recommendations by medical and veterinary authorities, especially with respect to monitoring rabies in bats. The workshop had also contributed to dispelling negative attitude towards bats and rabies.

11. Secretariat Report

The Executive Secretary, Mr. Andreas Streit, referred to the written Report (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.6). He noted that the move of the Secretariat to new premises had taken place and that it was good to be co-located with UNEP/CMS Convention and other CMS Agreements once again. He thanked the government of Germany, sincerely, for having provided the excellent office facilities. He noted that for this Session of the Meeting of Parties many National Implementation Reports had arrived very late and some were still missing. Therefore it had not been possible to produce a synthesis of reports for the Meeting. He recognised the great burden for Parties, to report to Conventions and Agreements they are parties to, but advised that work was underway within the UNEP/CMS to provide a new online reporting system to help with submission of national reports.

He was happy to report that since the 4th Session of the Meeting of Parties, Slovenia, Estonia and Italy had joined the Agreement. He extended a warm welcome to all new Parties, and was glad that he could count on their future cooperation and support for the successful operation of the Agreement. He also noted that there were key Non-Party Range States with very important bat populations, and it was important to encourage them to accede to the Agreement. He urged Parties to assist in lobbying towards these countries on behalf of the Secretariat, because it was impossible for the Secretariat to carry out this work alone.

He was very pleased to report on the continued success of European Bat Night celebrations, and expressed delight that people continue to organise and participate in local initiatives and that many countries had found the production of Bat Night posters

very helpful and useful. He thanked the German Ministry of the Environment for hosting and funding an event in Bonn prior to the Meeting.

He expressed great pleasure in the ever-increasing amount of voluntary contributions for projects managed by EUROBATS. While noting the importance of the project work, he mentioned the increased work of the Secretariat.

He expressed thanks to the UNEP/CMS Secretariat for continued support on a daily basis.

There was a request from Luxembourg that their voluntary contribution should go towards projects on bat conservation, rather than towards the costs of Advisory Committee meetings. The Executive Secretary supported the proposal, but noted that the actual costs of Advisory Committee meetings depended greatly on voluntary contributions. He asked Parties to ensure that the regular budget in the future would cover the cost of meetings, which should be helped by adopting the proposed new structure.

12. Report of the Depository (Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.49)

The United Kingdom was pleased to inform the Meeting that since the 4th Session of the Meeting of Parties, Slovenia, Estonia and Italy had acceded to the Agreement. The Depository encouraged those Parties who had not yet done so, to deposit their instruments of acceptance for the second Amendment to the Agreement.

13. Review of the implementation of the Agreement

All present Parties and Non-Party Range States made oral presentations regarding bat conservation measures of the last triennium. Range States also informed the Plenary about the progress made in acceding to the Agreement. Non-Governmental Organisations reported on bat conservation work in their countries.

France commented that bat conservation required a united approach across many different sectors and that it was essential to receive information documents at least one month in advance of Meetings, in order to obtain support from different sectors.

Concerning progress on acceding to the Agreement, Austria advised that there was no plan to become Party to the Agreement at present. The Russian Federation called for assistance to join UNEP/CMS and the Agreements. Serbia advised that they were preparing to join UNEP/CMS and were likely to join the EUROBATS Agreement as well. They also agreed to provide the name of a Focal Point in Montenegro.

Société Française pour l'Étude et la Protection des Mammifères (SFEMP) reported on a Life Programme project for *R. euryale*, *M. schreibersii* and *M. capaccinii*, which was aiming to determine the foraging habitats of the 3 species.

Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU) – reported great interest among members in taking part in a pan-European project for monitoring underground sites.

Gruppo Italiano Richerche Chiroteri advised that there was strong and effective cooperation with the Italian Government and increased public awareness of bat conservation.

The Wildlife Conservation Society, MUSTELA in Serbia advised that they had successfully initiated founding of a bat group in Montenegro and that all monitoring work and bat workers training was continuing.

The Bat Conservation Trust reported great interest in the pan-European monitoring project and that it was delighted to take forward the BatLife project as requested at AC11.

IUCN Europe advised that the IUCN was carrying out a Red List assessment for all European mammals, including all bats. The results were in a consultation process and should be available later this year.

14. Report of the Credentials Committee

The Chair of the Credentials Committee, Mr. Huw Thomas (UK), reported that 25 Parties had presented valid credentials. Those of Albania were signed by the Environment Minister and not the Head of State, Head of Government or the Minister of Foreign Affairs but they were accepted.

Those of Hungary were also signed by the Environment Minister and are presently a faxed photocopy and not the original document and are thus not satisfactory. The Committee was, however, content to accept them on a provisional basis, on condition that the original document is submitted to the Secretariat within two weeks after the Meeting of the Parties. There was no obvious official seal on the Credentials of Finland or Ireland but the documents were accepted as presented.

No credentials were provided by Macedonia, the Slovak Republic and Lithuania.

The Chair of the Credentials Committee urged the Parties to ensure that the credentials submitted to the next Session of the Meeting of Parties should meet all formal

requirements. The provision of translations into English as the working language of the Agreement, or otherwise French or German was considered helpful.

Finally, Mr. Huw Thomas (UK) thanked the delegates from Sweden, the Ukraine and FYR Macedonia, for kindly volunteering to assist with this task.

15. Allocation of Tasks to the Working Groups

The documents for discussion by the working groups were allocated as follows:

Administrative Working Group

- i) Draft Resolution 5.1: Financial and Administrative Matters (Budget 2007 – 2010).
- ii) Draft Resolution 5.8: Establishment of a Standing Committee of the Agreement (StC).
- iii) Draft Resolution 5.9: Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee (AC).

Scientific Working Group

- i) Draft Resolution 5.2: Bat Rabies in Europe
- ii) Draft Resolution 5.3: Amendment of the Annex to the Agreement.
- iii) Draft Resolution 5.4: Monitoring Bats across Europe.
- iv) Draft Resolution 5.5: Amendment to Resolution 4.6: Guidelines for the issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of Captured Wild Bats.
- v) Draft Resolution 5.6: Wind Turbines and Bat Populations.
- vi) Draft Resolution 5.7: Guidelines for the Protection of Overground Roosts, with particular reference to roosts in buildings of cultural heritage importance.
- vii) Draft Resolution 5.10: Establishment of the EUROBATS Implementation Advisory Board (EIAB)
- viii) Draft Resolution 5.11: Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (2007 – 2010).
- ix) Draft Resolution 5.12: Geographical Scope of the Agreement.

16. Reports of the Administrative and the Scientific Working Groups

The Working Groups presented their reports that are attached as **Annexes 2 and 3**.

17. Draft Resolution 5.1: Financial and Administrative Matters (Budget 2007 - 2010)

The Netherlands wishes, in regard to the audit report, to maintain its contribution as proposed in Draft Resolution 5.1. The Netherlands further instructed the Secretariat to use this voluntary increase in contribution to cover an increase in the host country (the staff salary increases) and other unforeseen shortfalls. The Secretariat commented that budget negotiations had been difficult and that there was an option to consider countries not taking a cut in their budgets, but either accepting the original proposal of an increase or of no change either way. A number of Parties supported the decision of the Netherlands. The Meeting was pleased to hear that those countries whose contributions, based on the adopted budget, would be lower in the coming four years, decided that they did not wish this to happen. Some Parties decided to revert to their contributions resulting from the original budget proposal. These were: (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, FYR Macedonia, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden). Other Parties decided to maintain the same level of contribution as in the past triennium. These were: (Czech Republic, Hungary, Luxembourg, Moldova and Ukraine).

A number of Parties wished to include in the Record their wish that the Draft budget presented by the Secretariat for consideration at future Sessions of the Meeting of Parties should include realistic itemised provision for all anticipated costs and contingencies. The Secretariat explained that the audit report was a key document and that the Auditors had indicated an increase in the budget was required to cover contingencies but that this should be left to the Parties to decide.

The Resolution and relevant Annexes were adopted with amendments (**Annex 4**).

The Executive Secretary noted for the record that the Parties had decided not to follow most of the Auditors recommendations and that this involved a potential risk for shortfalls in the coming financial years.

18. Draft Resolution 5.2: Bat Rabies in Europe (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.8.Rev.3)

The Resolution was adopted by the Meeting by consensus as amended (**Annex 5**).

19. Draft Resolution 5.3: Amendment of the Annex to the Agreement (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.9 and Inf.EUROBATS.MoP5.9.Rev.1)

The Resolution was adopted by consensus (**Annex 6**).

**20. Draft Resolution 5.4: Monitoring Bats across Europe
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.10)**

The Resolution was adopted by consensus (**Annex 7**).

**21. Draft Resolution 5.5: Amendment to Resolution 4.6: Guidelines for the issue of Permits for the Capture and Study of Captured Wild Bats
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.11.Rev.2)**

The Resolution was adopted by consensus with amendments (**Annex 8**).

**22. Draft Resolution 5.6: Wind Turbines and Bat Populations
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.12.Rev.3).**

A small group revised the Draft Resolution and its Annex. After amendments were presented to the Plenary the document was adopted (**Annex 9**).

**23. Draft Resolution 5.7: Guidelines for the Protection of Overground Roosts, with particular reference to roosts in buildings of cultural heritage importance
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.13.Rev.1).**

The Resolution was adopted by consensus (**Annex 10**).

24. Draft Resolution 5.8: Establishment of a Standing Committee of the Agreement (StC) (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.14.Rev.2)

The Resolution was adopted by consensus after some discussion and with amendments (**Annex 11**).

**25. Draft Resolution 5.9: Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.15)**

The Resolution was adopted by consensus (**Annex 12**).

26. Draft Resolution 5.10: Establishment of the EUROBATS Implementation Advisory Board (EIAB)

The Draft Resolution was withdrawn, since the Scientific Working Group had the opinion that on this subject an Intersessional Working Group of the Advisory Committee should be created (see Annex 3 of the Record). The Meeting accepted this suggestion, as such a mandate was also covered by paragraph 1 of the Conservation and Management Plan.

27. Draft Resolution 5.11: Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.17.Rev.2)

The Resolution was adopted by consensus with amendments and **renumbered to 5.10 (Annex 13)**.

28. Draft Resolution 5.12: Geographical Scope of the Agreement (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP5.20.Rev.1)

The Resolution was adopted by consensus and **renumbered to 5.11 (Annex 14)**.

29. Draft Resolution 5.13: 2008 - International Year of the Bat

The Secretariat introduced this Resolution and noted that UNEP/CMS felt there should be attention to bats on a global as well as regional scale and hoped that other regions would develop Agreements similar to EUROBATS. UNEP/CMS were requesting EUROBATS Parties to endorse the proposal. It was noted that there had recently been an International Year of the Bat and it was suggested to change the wording to “Global” instead of “International”. The Resolution was adopted by consensus with that amendment and **renumbered to 5.12 (Annex 15)**.

30. Election of Members of the Standing Committee

The delegate from Sweden proposed Finland as a member and this was seconded by Latvia.

The delegate from the Netherlands proposed Czech Republic and this was seconded by Croatia and Slovenia.

The delegate from France proposed Italy and this was seconded by Albania.

The delegate from Moldova, seconded by Ireland, proposed Ukraine.

The delegate from Belgium, seconded by Portugal, proposed France.

Duly, Finland, Czech Republic, France, Ukraine and Italy were elected to join the United Kingdom (Depositary) and Germany (host country of the Secretariat) as members of the Standing Committee.

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be elected by the members of the Committee in the first formal Meeting of the Committee.

31. Arrangements for the 6th Session of the Meeting of Parties

The delegate from the Czech Republic wished to invite the next Session of the Meeting of Parties in 2010 to take place in the Czech Republic.

32. Any other business

There was no other business.

33. Adoption of the Record of the Meeting

The Record and its Annexes were adopted by consensus.

34. Close of Meeting

The Executive Secretary expressed his gratitude about the successful outcomes of the Meeting. He thanked the Chair and the Vice-Chair for having handled the proceedings in such an excellent manner. He also thanked again the Slovenian Ministry of Environment for having hosted the Meeting. Furthermore the Executive Secretary thanked his assistants, Ms. Ayhan Polat, Ms. Dessislava Krüger, Ms. Janina Dräger and Mr. Max Jones for their excellent work.

The Chair thanked the Secretariat for its excellent work in preparation for and during the Meeting. He also expressed thanks to the Vice-Chair and Chairs of the Working Groups for their assistance. Furthermore he thanked the delegates for their substantial contributions to the successful work of the Meeting.

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Meeting formally closed at 00.05 on 7th September 2006.