

11th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

City of Luxembourg, Luxembourg, 8 – 10 May 2006

Report of the IWG on the Transboundary Programme - Habitats: Data Compilation



Members

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Data compilation

Since the last AC meeting, some amendments and improvements to the original data submitted by Estonia and Poland and Slovakia have been made and a site list has been submitted by Luxembourg. A list of all known underground sites in Italy was submitted to the Secretariat during 2005, but this is not currently in a suitable format for adding to the database. Parties submitting no data are Albania, Belgium, Denmark, France, FYR Macedonia, Malta, Moldova, Monaco, Netherlands and Sweden. Finland has indicated that it has no significant underground sites for bats. We understand that a list for France is at an advanced stage of preparation and are still hopeful that this will be submitted before the 5th Meeting of Parties. At the moment, the data presented at the 10th AC meeting are still reasonably accurate, so are not repeated here.

Data from this IWG have been passed to the monitoring IWG for consideration as the basis for a pan-European monitoring project. The database of underground sites would provide a good starting point for an underground monitoring project and this would fit very well with the objectives of this data collection and the proposed Resolution.

Protecting and managing underground sites for bats; draft publication

Since the last report, a French translation of the text has been prepared and circulated around French batworkers. Many helpful comments were received and these have been incorporated into a revised English version. Some small outstanding issues will be discussed at the IWG meeting, but it seems likely that French and English versions can be agreed. Some further comments have been added, including a case-study from the UK. Comments from Germany are still awaited.

Resolution

As Parties have submitted lists of their most important underground sites, we propose drafting a resolution which will urge them to manage these sites in line with the Eurobats guidance and also report on the state of the sites at some appropriate interval. This might be linked with the production of national reports or the pan-European monitoring project. A draft proposal is included at Appendix A.

Appendix A: Elements for a draft resolution on the management of underground sites

Resolution 4.3 was passed at MoP4. This required:

1. Parties who have not yet done so, should identify important underground habitats for bats, as required by Resolution No. 2.4, and transmit this information to the Secretariat;
2. Parties should ensure that the important underground habitats they have identified are fully protected by law and, where appropriate, are physically protected against unauthorised entry;
3. Parties should ensure that such habitats are managed in accordance with generic advice provided by the Advisory Committee.

All these elements remain relevant, particularly as not all Parties have yet submitted lists of sites.

If an additional resolution is desired for MoP5, we suggest the following elements:

1. Parties should take note of the Eurobats publication *Protecting and managing underground sites for bats*, which constitutes the generic advice of the Advisory Committee on this subject. [Of course this would depend on this publication being available]
2. Parties should report on the conservation status (condition) and use by bats of the sites they identified to the Secretariat as being of national importance. Reports may be included in annual national implementation reports and each site should be reported on at least once per Session (i.e. at least once every 4 years).
3. Parties are encouraged to adopt Eurobats recommended methodologies for the monitoring of their important underground sites and to submit data to a Eurobats monitoring project if appropriate.