

13th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Cluj, Romania, 23 – 24 August 2008

Secretariat Report



Staff

In October 2007 Tine Meyer-Cords has taken up the vacant part-time post of Administrative Assistant. Due to increased workload with ongoing and planned projects the post occupancy of the Secretary, Ayhan Polat, has been increased from 50% to 80% from 1 March 2008 until the end of the year for the time being. This was consulted and agreed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee and the necessary funds are available. The Standing Committee has agreed at its 2nd Meeting to evaluate the situation as well as the actual needs of the Secretariat at the end of 2008 in view of a possible extension of this arrangement.

National Implementation Reports

Since MoP5 the Secretariat has received further National Implementation Reports. 27 out of 31 Parties have complied with Article VI of the Agreement in 2006. A new Synthesis of National Implementation Reports was presented to the AC12 Meeting in 2007. A total of six voluntary updates were received in 2007. For 2008 until now only eight Parties and non-Party Range States (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Hungary, Italy, Moldova, Portugal, Russian Federation and United Kingdom) have sent a voluntary update. The Secretariat shall prepare an updated Synthesis when sufficient reports will be available.

Agreement Membership

Since the 5th Session of the Meeting of Parties in 2006 there have been no accessions to the Agreement. However, the growth in membership is expected to continue with the accession of several more countries. Armenia, San Marino, Serbia as well as Montenegro are in the process of acceding. The Secretariat continues to give a particular focus to the Mediterranean Region in its efforts to attract new Parties.

The Secretariat would like to reiterate its call upon Parties to assist in the recruitment of new Parties within their possibilities.

Publicity

The EUROBATS Publication Series No. 2 on “Protecting and managing underground sites for bats” was released in September 2007. No. 3 on “Guidelines for consideration of bats in wind farm projects” will be launched at the AC13 Meeting. No. 4 dealing with “Guidelines on the protection and management of important overground roosts” will be published in early 2009. No. 5 of the EUROBATS Publication Series - the “Guidelines on surveillance and monitoring methods for European bats” - as well as the leaflet on bat-friendly forest practises will follow as soon as finalised.

The Secretariat will continue to promote the European Bat Night. In 2007 new posters were printed.

A slightly updated new edition of the EUROBATS leaflet was also printed in 2007.

A new electronic format for the EUROBAT Chat Newsletter was developed and a new issue published in October 2007. The next issue is under preparation and will be published after AC 13.

Further publications and information material will depend on the availability of voluntary contributions.

The EUROBATS website has been updated on a regular basis in order to become more attractive and to provide more useful information. The Secretariat will make continuing efforts for further development.

The Secretariat can also report that the Agreement excites continuing public interest resulting in requests for TV, radio as well as newspaper reports and interviews.

Special Projects

In 2007 the Secretariat was able to finance (from voluntary contributions) and co-ordinate the following projects:

1. Workshop on wind turbines and bat populations.
2. Workshop on mitigating the impacts of development and land use change on bats.
3. Project Ukraine: Key sites for cave-dwelling bats of the continental south of Ukraine (continuing in 2008).
4. Project Romania with the aim of strengthening the bat NGOs, local branches, working groups and experts in Romania (continuing in 2008).

In August 2008 a project on “Providing expertise and developing mitigation measures for bats during planning and construction of infrastructure for Winter Olympic Games 2014 in Sochi, Russia” has started and will continue into 2009.

At the AC13 the Secretariat will launch a new project initiative for Eastern and South-Eastern European countries.