

13th Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Cluj, Romania, 23 – 24 August 2008

Report of the IWG on Producing Guidelines on Bat Monitoring Methods to Assess Population Trends at Different Levels

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1. Introduction

This intersessional working group was set up prior to MoP5. The IWG had the task to produce guidelines on monitoring European bat populations, recommending the best methods to use and providing a standard for new surveys so that data could be collected and collated in a more comparable way. At AC12 draft 6 of the guidelines was presented and an editorial group set up to finalise the guidelines for adoption at AC13.

2. Progress since AC12

The final draft of the guidelines has been prepared as Doc.EUROBATS.AC13.7. There are a few outstanding corrections or amendments required as follows:

- A few references are not completed and some additional references may need to be added at this stage.
- Some of the country monitoring profiles that are included as examples are not quite complete (e.g. Germany) and the information is requested for inclusion.
- It may be appropriate (or desirable) to include a photograph of each species next to the distribution maps in the species monitoring recommendations, but the IWG does not have access to a photo library. The AC should consider if this would be a useful addition to the guidelines and if so, suggest a suitable photo resource.
- Many experts have participated in this work, as members of the IWG and as corresponding sources of information and their help is greatly appreciated. The list of contributors, which will be moved to the front of the guidelines is, therefore, very long and some experts may not have been included. There is now a final

opportunity to make the Secretariat or the convenor aware of any omissions so that they can be incorporated before publication.

Essentially, with these minor amendments, the guidelines are complete and the IWG asks the AC to adopt them. Consideration should be given to the mode of publication, whether it should be a website only publication or one of the EUROBATS publication series. It is likely the guidelines would receive greater recognition and use as a EUROBATS publication.

3. Further work

Bibliography of monitoring publications. Originally, the guidelines were going to include a bibliography of monitoring publications from each Range State. The scope of this work has proved to be too large for completion and inclusion in the guidelines. The suggestion is that the collation of the bibliography should continue and be a growing information resource that is available on the EUROBATS website. The AC is asked to give consideration to how the collation of the bibliography might be managed and maintained.

Collation of survey and monitoring information. The IWG also undertook the collation of existing information on survey and monitoring schemes across all Range States. The collation has subsequently been used to inform the work of the IWG on developing bats as indicators and the spreadsheet of country survey and monitoring schemes has been updated as a result. This is now a very useful information resource and the AC is asked to give consideration to its future use. Potentially, it could be held on the EUROBATS website, but requires ongoing management and it is not clear how that might be achieved. However, it would be a pity if the information was not available for all to use.

4. Development of a pan-European monitoring project

Following the adoption at MoP 5 of Resolution 5.4 Monitoring Bats Across Europe, (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP.5.9) the AC agreed to support a project to assess the feasibility of pan-European monitoring of underground sites. The Bat Conservation Trust UK, with financial support from several Range States initiated a feasibility study and a draft report of the findings of the study is available for the AC to comment on.

The project manager, Roman Guziak will give a short presentation of the report at the meeting. The AC is invited to discuss future progress with this work, including producing a proposal to develop the pan-European monitoring project and to set up BatLife as a structure to provide overall management of the project. Funding sources for these two aspects have not been identified as yet.

5. Future of the Intersessional Working Group

The IWG has finalised its work in producing the guidelines and, other than assisting with publication, is no longer required. However, the AC should consider how pan-European monitoring can be further developed and whether a new IWG should be convened to act as a focus for this work within the AC. The work of the IWG on developing bats as indicators is very closely related to the pan-European monitoring project and both areas could be developed together within one IWG.