

## 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee

Belgrade, Serbia, 27 – 29 March 2017

### Secretariat Report



#### **Staff**

Since AC21 there have been no changes in the Secretariat staff. In January 2017, the Secretary, Kate Horn, has returned from extended maternity related leave.

#### **Agreement Membership**

Serbia has informed that on the governmental level the accession procedure is completed but is still awaiting the ratification by the parliament. The Secretariat continues to receive indications from several additional states preparing the accession to the Agreement.

#### **Outreach**

The various volumes of the EUROBATS Publication Series and Leaflets continue to be highly demanded. In 2016 the following new publications have become available with the support of voluntary contributions from Germany and Switzerland:

- The French and German versions of Publication Series No. 6 “Guidelines for consideration of bats in wind farm projects”
- Publication Series No. 7 “Common Names of European Bats”

The release of Publication Series No. 7 in December 2016 has triggered increased attention for all available publications. From January 2017 to the first week of March alone the record number of almost 2.300 publications had to be disseminated by the Secretariat. Reprints will become necessary during 2017.

Celebrating the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Agreement and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of International Bat Night a special poster has been designed and made available. The International Bat Night continues to be extremely successful. Reports of events are available on the EUROBATS website.

#### **Special Projects**

For 2016/2017 the Secretariat was able to finance and co-ordinate the following projects through EPI funding:

- Survey of distribution and conservation status of bats in Armenia
- *Plecotus sardus* on Sardinia
- Capacity building for the development of the guidelines for wind farm construction based on field study in Macedonia
- The “Carol” line: Assessing importance of at least 150 deserted bunkers for the conservation of the Romanian-Hungarian cross-border bat fauna
- *Nyctalus lasiopterus* in the far north? Population size and habitat use of a maternity colony in the Pripjat floodplains in the South of Belarus
- Bats across borders: Study of south-eastern bat migration way in Eastern Europe in Ukraine and Russia

These projects become possible thanks to voluntary contributions from Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland.

In addition, the Secretariat has provided support to the 5<sup>th</sup> International Berlin Bat Meeting.

### **Online Reporting System for National Implementation Reports**

Based on the new format adopted by MoP7 the online reporting system has been further tested and will be available for the submission of the mandatory national implementation reports before MoP8.

### **Joint EU-EUROBATS Species Action Plan on Bats**

Already in 2013 the development of a joint Species Action Plan on Bats had started between the European Commission and EUROBATS. The Commission has informed that the final draft will be sent to the Member States and experts for last comments in the week before AC22.