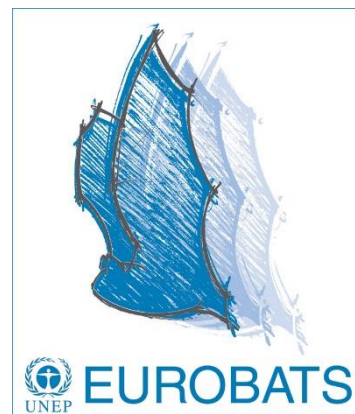


8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties

Monte Carlo, Monaco, 8 – 10 October 2018

Record



1. Attendance

This is listed in Annex 1 to the Record.

2. Opening remarks:

The Chair of the Standing Committee to EUROBATS, Mr. Jeroen Panis, opened the 8th Session of the Meeting of Parties and gave the word to Ms. Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo, the representative of the host government.

Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo greeted all the MoP participants, including Madame Anne Marie Boisbouvier, who is Advisor to His Serene Highness the Prince's Cabinet and who was briefly present at the meeting. Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo was pleased to welcome the participants on behalf of the Government of Monaco. She thanked the dedicated collaborators of Monaco Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry for the Environment for organising this meeting as well as the EUROBATS Secretariat for its support. For Monaco it was important to host this meeting, also since His Serene Highness, Prince Albert of Monaco, was very committed to environmental protection. Moreover, Monaco had a strong link to the Convention of Migratory Species and its instruments: in Monaco the Secretariat of Accobams was situated and the Principality would also host the 3rd Meeting of the Signatories to the Sharks MoU.

It was true that the Principality was naturally turned towards the sea as its territorial waters were 36 times larger than its land territory. However, by hosting the 8th Session of the Meeting of Parties, it hoped to raise awareness among the public on the necessity of preserving terrestrial species, and in particular bats, as they played a key role in the ecosystem equilibrium. Monaco was, therefore, very pleased to see that 41 countries were represented at this meeting with 70 participants coming to protect European bat species.

The agenda of this meeting confirmed that one of the biggest strengths of EUROBATS was being very close to the field, which helped collect accurate data for bat conservation measures.

In addition, the draft resolutions reflected priorities and provided practical guidance to the Parties on how to address issues such as light pollution, climate change, man-made roots or insect decline, to mention just a few, which were of great interest to Monaco as well.

Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo concluded by wishing the participants a fruitful meeting, as some crucial decisions would have to be taken during this session.

The Chairs of the Standing and Advisory Committees

Mr. Jeroen Panis thanked the government of Monaco for hosting the meeting and for its generosity. He also thanked the delegates for attending the meeting as well as the Secretariat for the preparations. There was a lot of work to be done during the meeting and Mr. Panis wished the participants a productive session in the spirit of EUROBATS, which was warm, open and respectful.

The Chair of the Advisory Committee, Dr. Ferdia Marnell, was looking forward to a fruitful meeting during which the Advisory Committee would get a chance to explain what had been achieved in the previous four years of hard work as well as to set the priorities for its future work. Dr. Marnell thanked Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo for organising MoP8. He also welcomed new delegates to the meeting and expressed his hope that they would attend the future meetings as well.

The United Nations Environment Programme and the Convention on Migratory Species

On behalf of Dr. Bradnee Chambers, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), Mr. Streit read an opening statement in the name of UN Environment and CMS. Dr. Chambers stated that the meeting represented yet another milestone in the progress of the EUROBATS Agreement, which had seen a lot of implementation successes since the previous MoP and had welcomed two new members to its family – Israel, which became a Party in 2015, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, whose accession was imminent.

Dr. Chambers mentioned that MoP would in the following days examine Resolutions addressing the impacts of some of the most far-reaching global

conservation issues affecting EUROBATS-listed species. The man-made challenges to maintaining healthy and resilient migratory bat populations were difficult to overcome, and moreover, they were often interlinked, such as, for example, climate change, light pollution, the effects of wind turbines, and insect decline. These conservation challenges affected not only EUROBATS species, but also the entire CMS family, and many CMS-listed species. The cooperation between the CMS and EUROBATS Secretariats continued to be very good and the CMS Secretariat was looking forward to the implementation of the 2019 – 2022 Conservation and Management Plan, which this Body was requested to adopt, together with the Resolutions addressing the issues of bat conservation and protection. Dr. Chambers stated that CMS also encouraged the strengthening of the scientific support for EUROBATS. Such a move could only make the Agreement stronger, and lead to accurate science-based policies.

He concluded by saying that the decisions made at this meeting would do a lot to ensure the continued conservation of European migratory bats. He thanked the EUROBATS Parties, the Secretariat, and the Government of Monaco for hosting the meeting and he wished everybody a productive few days of work, discussions, and meetings.

The Secretariat

On behalf of the Secretariat, the Executive Secretary, Mr. Andreas Streit, expressed his warmest thanks to the government of Monaco for inviting this session of the MoP and for its generous support. He also thanked the Walloon Government as well as the governments of Germany and Sweden for their outstanding support, without which the MoP organisation would not be possible. Finally, he thanked the participants for attending, especially those who joined the meeting for the first time. He was sure they would notice the friendly atmosphere which was characteristic for EUROBATS meetings. He concluded by wishing all a productive meeting.

Before proceeding to the next point on the Agenda, the Chair of the Advisory Committee explained that during the last joint meeting of the Advisory and the Standing Committees in Tallinn the news reached the participants that one of their colleagues, Mr. Boyan Petrov, went missing during an expedition in the Himalayas. Boyan Petrov was the EUROBATS scientific focal point for Bulgaria. In his commemoration, Ms. Nia Toshkova, his former student and the representative of

the National Museum of Natural History in Sofia, gave a short speech, which was followed by the film about Boyan, prepared by his colleagues from Bulgaria.

3. Adoption of the Agenda

The Chair of the Standing Committee asked whether there were any remarks or additions to the agenda. Norway commented that it would be useful for the future meetings to include the dates in the provisional list of documents to show when the documents were made available. Norway also referred to the deadline, mentioned in the rules of procedure, for publishing documents. In response, the Executive Secretary supported the proposal of Norway to include the dates in the list of documents. He also mentioned that the rules of procedure as well as draft resolutions were all posted in June, after which only some minor amendments were made. The Secretariat's goal was to make draft resolutions available as soon as possible after they were prepared at the joint meeting to allow for internal consultations within governments. The revisions which were done afterwards did not touch upon the substance of draft resolutions, but some minor amendments in the wording were done. There being no further remarks on this subject, the agenda was adopted.

4. Adoption of the Rules of Procedure

The StC-Chair explained that there were minor changes to the Draft Rules of Procedure and asked the Executive Secretary to present these to the plenary. Mr. Streit explained that the Draft Rules of Procedure were identical to those adopted at MoP 7, with the exception of Rule 3, for which, upon the proposal of Norway, a new, clearer, wording on the formal requirements of credentials was suggested. The previous Rules of Procedure just mentioned the need for credentials but offered no details as to who should issue the credentials. With the recent amendment to the Rules of Procedure these were harmonised with the Rules of Procedure already existing for the other CMS family agreements. Referring to Rule 23, Mr. Streit explained that traditionally it was the StC-Chair who was elected to preside over the Administrative Working Group during MoP, while the AC-Chair was elected to preside over the Scientific Working Group. This was a logical and good choice since in the four years leading to the MoP the Chairs were deeply involved in the subject matter the Committees were dealing with. For future meetings it was suggested to skip the election and have the AC-Chair and the StC-Chair automatically elected to preside over the Working Groups. In case they were

not present, the Vice-Chairs of the Advisory and the Standing Committees would be elected, and only if neither the Chairpersons nor the Vice-Chairs were present, others could be elected to chair the two Working Groups during the MoP.

Commenting on the Rules of Procedure, Norway stated that MoP was the highest body of the Agreement and its Rules of Procedure had to be taken seriously. This also included the deadline until when the documents had to be posted. Although those deadlines could vary depending on the type of documents, they had to be respected to assist the Parties to contemplate the documents in preparation for the MoP. Additionally, Norway proposed a change in the Rules of Procedure with regard to the admission of NGOs and observers to MoP sessions. It would be advisable to ask the Parties before the session if there were any objections and inform the observers accordingly if they could attend. Furthermore, Norway commented that it would have been useful to have marked the changes and amendments already made in the Rules of Procedures. Relating to the amendment regarding credentials, it would also be useful to name the authority that should issue the credentials (agency or ministry of climate or the environment). The Executive Secretary answered that at this stage it was not possible to change the requirements for credentials and that these were in line with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. If requested, there was a possibility to go more into depth on this matter, but only for the following session of the Meeting of Parties, as no change could be decided upon at this meeting. Norway agreed with this and requested that the Secretariat should look into this matter and resolve it for the following MoP. After this discussion, the Rules of Procedure were adopted.

5. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

The Parties were requested to nominate and elect candidates for the posts of the MoP Chair and Vice-Chair. The Chair of the Standing Committee nominated Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo for MoP Chair. The floor was opened for further nominations. France seconded the nomination, as well as Norway and Sweden. There were no other nominations and Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo was elected MoP Chair. For the MoP Vice-Chair Portugal nominated Croatia, which was seconded by Ireland and Norway, thus electing Ms. Zrinka Domazetović as Vice Chair of MoP8.

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

Ms. Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo explained that, taking into account the amendment to the Rules of Procedure which had been agreed upon, the Chairs of the Advisory and the Standing Committees would preside over the two Working Groups during MoP8.

7. Establishment of the Credentials Committee and Election of Chair

Sweden nominated the United Kingdom as Chair of the Credentials Committee. This nomination was supported by Portugal, Norway, and the Czech Republic. Poland then nominated Sweden, and Denmark nominated Bulgaria. Germany supported both nominations. Additionally, Georgia nominated Luxembourg, which was supported by France. The Executive Secretary congratulated the members of the Credentials Committee and reminded those delegates who had not submitted their credentials to do so by the afternoon, or to inform the Secretariat when they were expecting to receive their credentials, so that the Credentials Committee could organise its work.

8. Admission of Observers

The MoP chair asked the Parties, since Bosnia and Herzegovina had almost completed its accession process and its instrument was expected to be deposited soon, whether they agreed to recognise Bosnia and Herzegovina as a Party already for this MoP session. Israel and Norway were not in favour of this proposal.

Subsequently, the Chair referred to the provisional list of participants and the observers to the meeting listed there. She asked whether anybody objected to those observers being present at the meeting. There being no objections, she welcomed the observers to the meeting.

9. Report of the Chairperson of the Standing Committee

The Chair of the Standing Committee apologised that his written report was not sooner made available as document, however, it was on the EUROBATS website to be consulted if necessary. For this reason, he only highlighted a few points, the first one being the workplan of the Secretariat which was very important for the discussion on the post occupancy of the Scientific Officer. Another major topic was the financial wellbeing of the Agreement. It was still stable, but there were some concerns that had to be addressed at the MoP. The Administrative Working Group

would go into depth of this subject during its session. The Chair of the Standing Committee explicitly thanked the governments of Monaco, Germany, Sweden as well as the Walloon Government for their voluntary contributions that made the organisation of the MoP possible.

10. Report of the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee

The Chair of the Advisory Committee referred to the more extensive report that was available as Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.6. He explained that the biggest part of the Advisory Committee work was done in the Intersessional Working Groups (IWGs). There were 15 of them at this session of the MoP, some of which had completed their work: The IWG on Bats and Light Pollution had finalised the guidelines, and at least two more IWGs had submitted their advanced drafts of guidelines. This productivity of the IWGs was partly facilitated by the Scientific Officer, who not only provided support to the Convenors of the IWGs, but who also helped wrap-up and polish the guidelines, which represented a clear endorsement of the work of the Advisory Committee. Additionally, the Advisory Committee also produced Draft Resolutions, which would help the Parties define the targets for the next period. Dr. Marnell concluded by thanking the Vice-Chair of the Advisory Committee, Professor Danilo Russo from Italy, for his productive work and support. In comment on the report given by Dr. Marnell, Belgium raised a question concerning the recently published guidelines on bats and light pollution – since it represented a guidance document, Belgium asked whether it was not necessary for such guidelines to be firstly approved by the MoP. The Advisory Committee did not have the mandate to publish a document as a guidance unless this was specifically defined as scientific guidance. Dr. Marnell answered that the guidelines were endorsed by the MoP usually as part of the resolution that was adopted by the MoP. Though appreciating the hard work of the Advisory Committee in the preparation and production of such guidelines, Germany suggested that the guidelines needed to be circulated well in advance of the MoP to enable the delegates to hold consultations within their governments whether the guidelines could be endorsed or not. Portugal supported this suggestion, at the same time reminding that there was no possibility to discuss in detail the guidelines during a MoP session. Norway, reflecting on the comments made by Portugal and Germany, suggested that the efforts had to be made to increase the deadline for admission of such guidelines up to three to six months before the MoP. Dr. Marnell

explained that four years was anyways a very short period of time to produce a guideline, but that the IWGs would try to keep these deadlines. He further added that the Convenors were volunteering for this hard work in addition to their regular jobs. The IWGs would try to make the texts available as early as possible. In the particular case of the guidelines on bats and light pollution, the text was made available for comments in advance via work space. It was further discussed that, in case documents needed an endorsement at the MoP, which meant that they needed a state-level commitment, a more formal request to all the focal points had to be made for examining the text. Germany also suggested that draft guidelines could be presented as documents for the last meeting before the MoP. Another proposal was to send an email with the text of the guidelines to all administrative and scientific focal points whenever there was a final draft of the guidelines available, stating also the deadline for submitting any comments on the text. It was agreed that the matter would be difficult to resolve at this meeting, but that there was a necessity to look into the ways how to organise this procedure. In conclusion, Mr. Streit explained that, though in the past there were cases where the guidelines were a part of the integral text of the resolution and were made annex to the resolution, this was not the case with the guidelines on bats and light pollution. Only under point 11 in the resolution in question were the Parties encouraged to develop and ensure implementation of national guidance following the EUROBATS publication series Number 8. Thus, it was completely up to the Parties to make good use of the guidelines for the implementation on the national level. Germany suggested that it should be considered to rephrase point 11 in Draft Resolution 8.6. Norway supported the proposal of Germany as “ensure implementation” appeared as a too strong expression.

11. Report of the Depositary

The United Kingdom in its capacity as Depositary informed the Parties that since the 7th Session of the Meeting of Parties (Brussels, Belgium, 15 – 17 September 2014), Israel has acceded to the Agreement, raising the number of Parties to 36. In the same period Israel accepted the 2nd Amendment of the Agreement (Bristol, July 2000). The Depositary wished to encourage those Parties that had not yet done so, to deposit their instruments of acceptance for the 2nd Amendment of the Agreement. Up to date status lists for the Agreement (Annex 1) as well as for the

2nd Amendment of the Agreement (Annex 2) were attached to the written report, available as Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.7.

Israel wished to comment on the report of the Depositary, in particular on note 9 on page 4 of the written report, saying that at the time Israel joined Eurobats, it issued a reservation for the Egyptian fruit-eating bat, *Rousettus aegyptiacus*. To its knowledge, this was the only case in which a EUROBATS member Party had a reservation and Israel wished to explain the reason for this. In Israel there are 32 species of insectivorous bats, and one species of fruit-eating bat. The Egyptian fruit-eating bat, *Rousettus aegyptiacus*, is absent from all the other EUROBATS Parties, except Cyprus, where it is rare. However, in Israel they are so common that they were legally defined as an agricultural and household pest since the 1950's. In the 1960's a poisoning campaign by Israel's agricultural ministry tried to destroy them in their caves, but the poisoning stopped after agreement was reached between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Israel Nature and Parks Authority. Under that agreement, which was over 25 years old and was still valid, the fruit bats were still legally defined as pests and not as a protected species, yet the agricultural ministry agreed to leave all cases of dealing with the damage in the hands of the Israel Nature and Parks Authority. The agency had found a careful balance of protecting the species while reducing the farmer's frustration levels over damage to agriculture by working with farmers and agricultural ministry advisers to deal with damage to fruit crops (such as lychee and dates), only on a very local level, without harming wider populations of fruit bats. Over the previous 20 years, a small number of permits were issued by the agency to control fruit bat damage by lethal control using mist-net trapping, but this was no longer practiced. Israel must still maintain a reservation for the Egyptian fruit bat, as the species was still not fully protected by Israeli law. However, there was no more lethal control of fruit bats, and the Israeli government intended to declare them as protected species and then remove the EUROBATS reservation in the future, though it cannot be exactly said when this would occur.

The Executive Secretary thanked Israel for the explanation provided – it was a very good example how after difficult times the way forward could be found to conserve bats. Israel had developed exemplary techniques and could serve as a good example for other countries how to deal with similar situations.

12. Secretariat Report

The Executive Secretary referred to the written report available as Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.8 and wished to highlight only a few points, one of them being the work on producing EUROBATS publication series. There was an impressive list of publications which were highly demanded and for which the Secretariat received very positive feedback, showing that the work and resources invested in the publications were well used.

The second point to be highlighted was the long and impressive list of projects carried out within the EPI framework. Regular voluntary contributions of Germany, Luxembourg and Switzerland made these projects possible. It was the EPI assessment panel composed of senior experts and appointed by the Advisory Committee that ranked the project proposals. Mr. Streit wanted to thank all involved, especially the Scientific Officer, without whom in that manner and to that extent the conducting of these projects would not be possible.

The last point made in the report of the Secretariat referred to the development of a joint Species Action Plan on Bats (SAP) that started between the European Commission and EUROBATS already in 2013. After further consultations among the experts and consultation with EU member states, the SAP was expected to be adopted by the EU Habitats Committee in the near future. Portugal noted that the SAP should be revised again according to the new resolutions that would be adopted during this MoP, as it would otherwise be outdated.

13. Review of the Implementation of the Agreement

The Parties were invited to give very brief oral reports on their implementation activities. Non-Party Range States were requested to report on progress made in their preparations to accede to the Agreement.

PARTIES

ALBANIA:

During the spring and summer of 2018, in Albania, two small projects for the protection of the biodiversity in the basin of the Drini river were implemented. A group of young scientists was engaged in the monitoring of bats in the Gajtani cave. The same was done in the south, in Librazhdi, where young scientists were involved in monitoring the Pellumbasi cave.

At the University of Shkodra, with a group of master's students in environmental biology, the list of bats in Albanian and in English were presented as well as the EUROBATs publication series Number 7.

There was a positive feed-back from the implementation of the moratorium against cutting and hunting. More birds and bats were present in Albania's ecosystems, in the forest of Razma, in Shkodra Lake, etc. Albania's civil society planned to also assess the presence of bats in forests and with the support of its agencies a monitoring of the biodiversity in the forest of Razma ecosystem, located in the north, and in the Voskopoja forest ecosystem, located in the south, was to be conducted.

BELGIUM:

With respect to the general population status and trends, there were no new figures compared to the 2013 EU Habitats Directive reporting. A new 2017 evaluation in the frame of the European Bat Population trends EEA reporting, analyzing trends of hibernating bats for Belgium since 1992/93 to the winter of 2015/16 (Nyssen et al, in prep), showed a strong increase of hibernating bat numbers of most cave dwelling species or pooled species (some *Myotis*, *Plecotus* and *Pipistrellus*), after correction for census efforts. The increase was particularly high for *M. emarginatus* and *M. Bechsteinii*, but also increasing numbers of *R. ferrumequinum* were present in Wallonia.

Regular and yearly winters census efforts continued. Over 1,000 sites were monitored for hibernating bats. The efforts of the NGO's Natuurpunt, Natagora and their volunteers remained a crucial factor in bat conservation and monitoring in Belgium.

Major efforts were put into passive tracking with static bat recorders. New developments in automated bat call identification software speeded up this process. Efforts to locate colonies by radio tracking continued at an *ad hoc* basis.

The IUCN Red List status of the mammals of the Flemish region was reviewed in 2016, a species protection programme for all bats in the Flemish region was approved in September 2018. A lot of effort was put into environmental assessments of a growing wind turbine sector, as well as into providing policy support for a bird and bat collision guidance framework. The International Bat Night remained a key event but was no longer systematically supported in the Flanders

Region. The Belgian Bat Research Colloquium, November 18, 2017 was a major success.

BULGARIA:

During the last few years a National Program for Energy Efficiency of Multifamily Residential Buildings has started in Bulgaria. The implementation of the programme led to the need for consultations between the Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works and the Ministry of Environment and Water. After the consultations a working group was set up, with the participation of all stakeholders. The members of the working group are representatives of both ministries, municipalities, building associations, scientific institutes, regional environmental and water inspectorates, and NGOs. The aim is to develop a methodology for assessing the buildings planned for insulation for presence of protected species and to provide some mitigation measures. At this stage the methodology is almost ready. The objective is that this assessment becomes part of the technical specification of the buildings and to become mandatory. It has been concluded that this could be achieved through an instruction issued by both ministries.

The Ministry of Environment and Water has prepared a framework of an action plan for nine species of cave bats. This plan will be financed by Operational Program Environment.

In 2018 the International Bat Night took place in 17 towns across Bulgaria. One of the most successful events took place at the National Library in Sofia. More than 200 people came to participate at the workshop for bat boxes and to listen to a talk about the image of bats in the world literature. Efforts were being made to increase public awareness on the importance of bats and their protection. Another success was the fact that the Green Balkans NGO had received a 5-year-funding to support these efforts. Hopefully, this would help inform and inspire more people about the importance of bats. Furthermore, all educational workshops planned for the following 5 years would increase the number of bat specialists as well as their knowledge and skills on bat conservation and would provide them with important scientific methods and concepts related to bat conservation.

Additionally, Science for Nature Foundation was awarded with another 5-year-LIFE project about bat conservation. The aims of the project were to monitor, guard, and install protective gates at important and threatened bat sites in Bulgaria.

The goal was to increase the population size and the conservation status of nine bat species in eight NATURA2000 sites in Bulgaria. The main conservation action to be undertaken to achieve this goal was to provide the local bat population with new roost sources and, in addition, the conditions of 84 water sources in their field sites was going to be improved as well. This would provide the local bat population with additional food and water sources.

The past few months were marked by the loss of a dearest friend and colleague Boyan Petrov. What makes the situation hard is not only a personal loss, but also the loss of his key figure for bat protection in Bulgaria. The National Museum of Natural History selected Mr. Ilya Akosta to take Boyan's place at EUROBAT Advisory Committee. Mr. Akosta will be able to join the next Advisory Committee meeting. During MoP8, Ms. Nia Toshkova kindly agreed to replace Mr. Akosta and will provide him with all important information.

CROATIA:

Out of 33 bat species recorded in Croatia, 31 are resident and two are occasional. Based on new findings, *Rhinolophus mehelyi* and *Myotis aurascens* have been removed from the list of bat species present in Croatia. All bat species are strictly protected and 16 out of 33 recorded species are listed in the Red Book of Mammals of Croatia.

From April 2014 to October 2016 the inventory of bat fauna in the continental region of Croatia was conducted in the scope of the EU NATURA2000 Integration Project NIP, financed by a World Bank loan. Altogether 52 quadrants of 10x10 km were researched using mist netting, survey of underground and over-ground sites, bat detector survey and gathering all other additional data on bats. A total of 25 bat species was recorded (9 of them listed on Annex II of the Habitats Directive) and 73 roost sites (either individual or colonies) were found with 14 species.

Ecological Network of the Republic of Croatia (NATURA2000) includes 78 Sites of Community Importance (SCI) for 12 bat species from Annex II of the Habitats Directive.

In the scope of the project "Development of the NATURA2000 ecological network management framework", which started in 2018 and will last until the end of 2022, management plans for at least 200 NATURA2000 sites will be developed. This is a precondition for efficient management of at least 40 percent of the ecological

network in Croatia. Management plans for 23 NATURA2000 sites which encompass 31 internationally important underground sites for bats will be developed within the project. Project beneficiary is the Ministry of Environment and Energy and the Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature is a project partner.

A national project on the development of a system for monitoring the conservation status of species and habitats, which is implemented by the Croatian Agency for Environment and Nature, has started in mid-2018 and will continue until the end of 2022. The project foresees the establishment of a monitoring program for at least 322 species and habitat types and includes development and testing of monitoring programs for all bat species present in Croatia.

Both above-mentioned projects are being funded from the EU Operational Program Competitiveness and Cohesion 2014-2020.

International Bat Night events are being organised in August and September in all regions of Croatia by more and more organisers and are each year more successful in terms of the number of events, number of visitors and media coverage.

CZECH REPUBLIC:

The majority of approved EUROBATS resolutions has been implemented in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation Agency, Czech Bat Conservation Society and universities. Particularly worth mentioning is Resolution 7.6 on Conservation and Management of Important Underground Sites for Bats – an updated list of underground sites has been prepared and provided to the EUROBATS Secretariat.

The Ministry of the Environment has financially supported a survey concerning the impact of roads and other traffic infrastructures on bats to implement Resolution 7.9. The summary of the results has also been provided to the EUROBATS Secretariat.

Concerning Resolution 7.11. on Bats and Building Insulation, the Ministry of the Environment has approved the obligation concerning each company insulating buildings and asking for government's financial support for this. That company must include into its request the results from the basic bat pre-insulation survey. The publication „Bats in building. Reconstruction and solving problems“ has been updated and reprinted.

The working group for the implementation of EUROBATS that has been established under the Ministry of the Environment, and where the representatives of the Ministry, Nature Conservation Agency, Czech Bat Conservation Society and universities are included, meets regularly once a year and has been working successfully. Additionally, the very important role of the NGOs in the process of bat survey, protection, and mainly activities concerning ecological education should be highlighted as well.

The International Bat Night is organised every year on 59 sites across the whole country and hundreds of other bat events for schools and public are organised yearly by the NGOs.

DENMARK:

The municipalities that manage much of the practical, day-to-day nature conservation in Denmark are becoming increasingly aware of bats and their need for conservation actions, e.g. in relation to wind turbines, demolition and renovation of buildings, etc. Some municipalities are performing surveys of bats at a more detailed geographic level than the national monitoring programme.

The national bat monitoring programme for the Article 17 reporting to European Union is proceeding but not quite as planned. The monitoring programme is based on the Site Species Richness Method and records occurrence of bat species at 192 sites over a six-year period. Unfortunately, the consultant who was commissioned to carry out the monitoring in 2014 and 2015 was selected solely on the price criterion and lacked appropriate qualifications to identify bat species from their echolocation calls, which resulted in some of the species apparently having experienced significant changes in their distribution and occurrences (e.g. the pond bat was supposedly absent from many prime habitats). As other projects showed different information than that, attempts are now being made to restore the suitable dataset for the assessment of the bat species' conservation status.

A very skilled researcher and a former scientific focal point for EUROBATS has carried out a project that documented Denmark has a small breeding population of Bechstein's bat on the most eastern island of Bornholm in the Baltic Sea. Compared to the rest of the country this island is characterized by a relatively large land cover by forest, a relatively large proportion of less-intensively managed deciduous forest with a long continuity.

Whenever bats in various projects are handled, swabs are taken for a low-intensity monitoring of prevalence of rabies and corona virus.

ESTONIA:

The main activity in bat protection of Estonia in the last four years has been the action plan for bats for 2017-2021. This document presents a preliminary budget for the next years and lists necessary measures, including research needs. Also, the LIFE Project ESTBAT is very helpful in the protection of pond bats and their hibernation sites.

Marine planning process has activated bat research at sea, using detectors to find possible bat migration routes on the sea.

Every year the International Bat Night is celebrated in four to six places with 600-800 participants.

Estonia had the honor to host the 23rd Meeting of the Advisory Committee and the 14th Meeting of the Standing Committee to EUROBATS. The national report was presented before the 8th Session of the Meeting of Parties.

FRANCE:

After a first restoration plan (1999-2004) aiming at the 34 species of French bats, followed by a national five-year action plan (2009 – 2013), a new national ten-year action plan (2016-2025) has been launched, focusing on the 19 species of bats that remain vulnerable at the national level or have a status that needs to be clarified.

The ten actions in this plan range from populations monitoring to outreaching and networking through the interface between bats and human activities. Most of the resolutions proposed to MoP8 are taken into account by these actions as well as by various recently published guidance documents, e.g. "Chiroptera and transport infrastructure", "Environmental monitoring protocol for onshore wind farms" (revised in 2018), "Bats and thermal insulation of buildings – state of knowledge and first courses of action" (to be published soon).

GEORGIA:

From the activities carried out in Georgia since the last MoP, the following activities should be highlighted:

1. A new wintering colony of about 2,100 individuals of *Rhinolophus Euryale* has been found in western Georgia (cave Melouri, Tskaltubo, Imereti).
2. Since 2009, after a few years interval, a wintering colony of about 800 individuals of *Minoterus screibersii* has been recorded in western Georgia (cave Sakishore, Ambrolauri, Racha).
3. The presence of a new species for Georgia, *Tadarida teniotis*, has been confirmed through recording its sounds.
4. The importance of bats for nature is becoming more and more understandable for private sector and companies working on big development projects. Accordingly, bats are considered as the key group of species and are taken into consideration during environmental impact assessments of big infrastructural projects. For example, in 2017 a company developed a special Bat Management Plan for its infrastructural project-area.
5. Construction of six wind farms is planned in different regions of Georgia. As part of feasibility study of this construction, bats survey is being carried out. The survey methodology follows the EUROBATS guidelines.
6. The National Centre for Disease Control of Georgia has initiated the project on Understanding the Risk of Bat-Borne Zoonotic Disease Emergence in Western Asia. The main objective of this project is to characterize the diversity of coronaviruses (CoVs) and to test key hypotheses about bat-borne zoonotic virus emergence risk in Western Asia to reduce the threat of infectious diseases. Mr. Ioseb Natradze, the EUROBATS scientific focal point for Georgia, has participated in this project and on behalf of the project management he has informed the meeting participants that, in case some countries are interested to provide samples, the NCDC researchers are ready to analyse bats droppings or faecal swabs on coronaviruses.

GERMANY:

A comprehensive report on the implementation of the Agreement since the last Meeting of Parties has been submitted to the Secretariat before MoP8. It contains information on the status of bats in accordance with the last national reporting according to Article 17 of the Habitats Directive.

24 of 25 species currently occur in Germany; no new species have been discovered.

One of the main topics remains the conflict between wind energy and bat conservation. Since the last Meeting of Parties the results of the research and development projects on “Bats and Wind energy in forests” and “Identification of bat migration” were published (Hurst, J., Biedermann, M., Dietz, C., Dietz, M., Karst, I., Krannich, E., Petermann, R., Schorcht, W. & R. Brinkmann (2016): Fledermäuse und Windkraft im Wald. – Naturschutz und Biologische Vielfalt 153, Bonn – Bad Godesberg, 396 S., [Meschede, A., Schorcht, W., Karst, I., Biedermann, M., Fuchs, D. & Bontadina, F. \(2017\): Wanderrouten der Fledermäuse. – BfN-Skripten 453](#), 236 S.).

Other projects e.g. on migration across North and Baltic sea or on possible negative impacts of wind farms in forests on bats such as disturbance are still ongoing.

A project on Bechstein’s bat within the framework of the Federal Programme on Biological Diversity has been running very successfully and the details of it will be presented later during the meeting.

All the bat work in Germany would not be possible without all the voluntary bat workers across the country who are organised in several different NGOs and themselves organise an impressive number of bat events and bat nights.

IRELAND:

Only nine species of bats are resident in Ireland – the smallest list of any Eurobats country. No further records of Brandt’s bat (*Myotis brandtii*) have been reported since a single individual was found in 2003. A single male greater horseshoe bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*) was found (and ringed) in the south-east of the country in 2013 and seen again in 2014 but has not been seen since.

The National Bat Monitoring Programme is continuing in Ireland; a new four-year contract to run this programme was signed with the national bat NGO – Bat Conservation Ireland – in early 2018. The Programme consists of four separate multi-annual monitoring schemes – car transect, waterways, lesser horseshoe bat summer and winter roosts, and brown long-eared bat maternity roosts. The schemes cover seven of our nine bat species and the population trend for each species is stable if not positive (see the full National Report online for details). The two remaining species are *Myotis nattereri* and *M. mystacinus*. These two species appear to occur at low densities across Ireland and no effective method of

monitoring them robustly has been identified to date. A pilot project to survey for these species in woodlands was run in 2016 and 2017 and Ireland is considering whether there is scope to roll this approach out more widely.

A more intensive survey programme for *Pipistrellus nathusii* has started recently in Ireland. Although this species has been detected in the car transect surveys across Ireland for many years, and a number of roosts for the species are known in Northern Ireland, dedicated surveys in 2015/2016 still failed to find any maternity or hibernation roosts for the species in the Republic of Ireland. Targeted mist netting in 2018 has led to the first ringing of Nathusius' pipistrelles in Ireland (3 males and 3 females) and it is hoped to expand this programme further to improve our understanding of the species' ecology and movement within Ireland.

Other highlights from the last four years include the publication in 2014 of a new book on Irish Bats called *Irish Bats in the 21st Century* and more recently, in 2016, the publication of the *Atlas of Mammals in Ireland 2010-2015*. Both publications were developed with colleagues from Northern Ireland.

ISRAEL:

There are 33 bat species in Israel, and as mentioned earlier, all but one are fully protected.

Israel has been undergoing a major conflict within the environmental community since the Environmental Ministry has set a goal to expand renewable energy by expanding tenders for new wind turbine farms, while the government's own wildlife agency, the Israel Nature and Parks Authority, together with NGOs have been fighting against this because of the potential impact to migratory birds and bats.

This is an ongoing battle in the courts and, unfortunately, the Environmental Ministry has been winning more than the NGOs have. The Israel Nature and Parks Authority, however, managed to ensure that the new turbines will have cut-out speed regulations and also delays when birds and bats flocks are detected nearby. It remains to be seen how effective these measures will be.

On the positive side, an Israeli scientist, Dr. Noam Leader, took part in preparation of the Eurobats publication series Number 8 on Bats and Lighting Projects, and Israel has been very active and effective in dealing with "Loss of the Night" and many aspects of light pollution in the country. For example, the Ramon Crater in

Israel was recently declared as a new International Dark Sky Park by the International Dark-Sky Association.

ITALY:

Since the last MoP, Italy has been active in the protection of important bat colonies and foraging habitats, has worked considerably to advance knowledge in the fields of bat ecology and conservation biology, including research on bats and forestry, or bats in agricultural ecosystems, and has supported projects that lie at the interface between conservation and research. These include LIFE+ actions that featured bats among their conservation targets and, more recently, an ongoing project funded by the Italian Ministry of the Environment that involves some of the major country's national parks. The main aim of the project is to detect and protect the ecological corridors that are of major importance to ensure gene flow between bat populations.

The country has also witnessed an ever-growing public awareness of bat conservation, which is surely also the outcome of the many bat nights and other effective outreach actions promoted within the EUROBATs framework.

Finally, Italy is pleased to announce the first confirmed record of *Plecotus kolombatovici* ascertained with molecular methods, which is new to the country and which will be hopefully published soon. Further details are provided in the national implementation report Italy submitted.

LATVIA:

The following points should be highlights from the last quadrennium:

1. Three-year-long projects to develop the Species Conservation Plan for the pond bat *Myotis dasycneme* and the Species Conservation Plan for the barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus* have started at the end of 2016 and in January 2017 respectively.
2. A project on establishing a national bat data base has been financed by the Latvian Environmental Protection Fund. The aim of this project is to gather the bat observations of 14 bat species in Latvia in a national data base until the end of 2019.
3. Several bat monitoring programmes have been financed by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development since 2014. Two of the

programmes are new – the monitoring of pond bats in feeding habitats and the countrywide monitoring of bats in private root cellars. Two other monitoring programmes – counts of bats in hibernacula and acoustic detector monitoring of migrating bats – are longstanding ones and they have been running since 1992 and 1993 respectively.

4. A successful international research collaboration took place between Latvian bat scientists of the Latvian University and Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies and the bat research group of the Institute for Zoo and Wildlife Research (IWZ) led by Dr. Christian Voigt in studies on bat migrating at the ornithological field station Pape, Institute of Biology, University of Latvia.
5. The first bat-oriented NGO in Latvia, the Latvian Bat Research society, was established in the beginning of 2017.

LUXEMBOURG:

Four points need to be highlight:

1. Research:
 - The Ministry of Sustainable Development and Infrastructure (MDDI), the Natural History Museum, and the regional Biological Stations have launched a biannual study to assess genetic population structure of *Myotis emarginatus* within the 12 known maternity roosts in Luxembourg, but also in relation to many other European countries.
2. Monitoring:
 - The nationwide bat monitoring program has continued and has been strengthened by simultaneous counts to assess population trends for the upcoming EU Habitats Directive Article 17 reporting to the European Commission.
3. Implementation of protection measures:
 - Luxembourg has continued its assessment and implementation of management plans for NATURA2000 sites, also updating bat data as target conservation species for the different sites.
 - The second National Nature Protection Plan (PNPN2) has been updated. *Myotis bechsteinii* and *Myotis emarginatus* were retained as umbrella priority species for species action plans.

- The most spectacular protection measure has been carried out in the North of Luxembourg. A deteriorated tunnel on a former railway line was due to be restored and lit up inside to enable a cycle way to run through, the so called Vennbahn, going from Germany through Belgium to Luxembourg. However, this project was stopped after it was discovered that the tunnel was used by several bat species, including our first record of *Myotis dasycneme*, and the site is due to be designated as a national protected area.
4. A book on the mammals of Luxembourg has been produced for the general public, with a print run of 7,500. The language of the book is German.

MACEDONIA, FYR:

Since the last joint Standing and Advisory Committee meeting in Tallinn, Estonia, in May 2018, the Macedonian work programme (prepared by the Macedonian Bonn Committee MBC) has continued to be implemented, including the EUROBATS Agreement.

Additionally, a translation into Macedonian language of the EUROBATS guidelines for the consideration of bats in wind farm projects is planned to be published very soon.

In cooperation with BatLife Macedonia, in the City Park of Skopje an International Bat Night event has been organized.

The full national report has been submitted to the Secretariat in time.

MALTA:

Eleven bat species are recorded in Malta, of which seven are considered as resident species.

Such species are covered by national and regional legislation, including European Commission Habitats Directive, which provide for various protection aspects in relation to bats. A permitting procedure is in place in this regard, with permits issued in connection with bat rescue and rehabilitation, as well as research/monitoring studies.

Furthermore, Malta as a Member State of the European Union is contributing towards the creation of the NATURA2000 network, which calls for the designation of sites for habitats important for bats. In this regard, Malta has designated several such sites, which are also covered by a Management Plan / Conservation Order

incorporating conservation measures. Assessment procedures are in place in this regard.

Awareness-raising in connection with bats takes place on a regular basis, especially through the organisation of 'Bat Nights'.

MOLDOVA:

On the territory of Moldova 21 bat species occur. The main achievement was the publishing of the Red Book of the Republic of Moldova, 3rd edition, in 2015, where 16 bat species were listed (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *Rh. hipposideros*, *Myotis myotis*, *M. blythii*, *M. bechsteini*, *M. nattereri*, *M. daubentonii*, *M. dasycneme*, *M. mystacinus*, *Nyctalus lasiopterus*, *Vespertilio murinus*, *Barbastella barbastellus*, *Plecotus auritus*, *P. austriacus*, *Pipistrellus kuhlii*, *P. nathusii*), while in the second edition from 2001 only 6 species were listed (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*, *Myotis bechsteini*, *Myotis nattereri*, *Nyctalus lasiopterus*, *Vespertilio murinus*, *Barbastella barbastellus*).

Under the law on the protection of animal world the financial penalty for injuring or destructing bat species has been increased.

Since 2012 the number of bat specialists has increased from zero to four, including two PhD students.

Within the Emerald network, which is similar to NATURA2000 in the European Union, some protected areas have been introduced, mostly because of bat colonies that hibernate and reproduce in these areas.

Public awareness on bat conservation has increased in the last years with the help of TV and radio interviews and talk shows, the organization of the International Bat Night in 2015, as well as the organization of a temporary exhibition dedicated to bats at the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History. The exhibition was presented at several high-schools in Chisinau and at the International Conference of Zoologists organized by the Institute of Zoology in 2016. Consequently, the cases of people calling for bat rescue increased in the last three years.

MONACO:

Efforts are being made to acquire more knowledge about the bat population occupying the territory of Monaco. The last national study was done two years ago,

and it showed the presence of at least 10 species of bats. The roosts locations are still unknown for the most part because modern habitats offer a multitude of potential breeding grounds, however, this will be the next study priority.

In terms of conservation, actions have been carried out such as:

1. Limiting light pollution on construction sites;
2. Restoring an old cave and making it accessible for bats;
3. Working on raising public awareness about the bat population.

An Environment Framework Law was finally adopted in Monaco last year. A lot of legal work remains to be done to make it practical, but there is no doubt that this tool will be the necessary foundation to more strictly protect biodiversity in Monaco.

The Government is also finalizing its National Strategy for Biological Diversity, which involved a lot of work during the last two years. The preservation of bats will be included into this framework document and its action plan.

Therefore, Monaco will have the necessary tools to protect terrestrial biodiversity in the Principality and it aims to implement a long-term bat conservation policy that will take into account the recommendations and guidelines made within the framework of the EUROBATS Agreement.

NORWAY:

Studies in Norway over the past years, published as peer-review articles, show that screes are important as wintering sites for bats in Norway. A major new development has been the initiation of a three-year project named Scandbat. This project focuses on local movements and the use of habitats through fitting radio transmitters on bats. The project is run by the Norwegian University of Life Sciences (<https://www.nmbu.no/en>) in collaboration with other bat experts.

A national strategic plan for development of wind energy has started and EUROBATS guidance is being used. In general, there is still a need to collate more information on migratory corridors and local movements to be able to evaluate and recommend mitigation or avoidance of sites in relation to wind energy.

The environment agency actively funds research projects and supports the main national NGO on bats (the Zoological Society) and the national representative to the Advisory Committee. However, the lack of dedicated bat experts is still an issue in Norway.

POLAND:

For the period from 2015 to 2018 several points should be highlighted:

1. Four Polish Bat Conferences have been organised within this period. The conference take place once a year, usually in November. More than 100 people (scientists and amateurs) are present at the conference and about 40 presentations on bats are available.
2. Important „Life +” project has been conducted in the second biggest bat winter roost in Poland – the Szachownica Cave. It was a complicated but successful maneuver, preventing the cave from collapsing. About 3.000 bats from 10 species hibernate there every year.
3. A large-scale “Life +” project concerning the protection of rare bat species maternity roosts in southern Poland has successfully been finished this year. It was carried out by an organization called “pro-Natura” from Wroclaw. The lesser horseshoe bat population was the main but not the only target of the project.
4. New regulations in wind turbines location and bat expert skills have been established. Wind turbines can now be located at a bigger distance (10 times of their height) from human settlements and protected areas. Bat experts are obliged to have higher education and some experience in environmental impact assessments.

PORTUGAL:

Bat research in Portugal is ongoing, covering several aspects of bat natural history and conservation biology.

Regarding mainland Portugal, the Monitoring Programme of Important Cave-dwelling Roosts has been running for 30 years. In the last quadrennium, there has been an increase of data collection and many undergraduate, MSc, and PhD theses have been prepared or are ongoing. Many papers and general documents have been published. An extraordinary work on public awareness has taken place, with more than 6,000 participants.

In the Autonomous Region of the Azores, the Bat Census Monitoring Project continues to be implemented by the Environmental authorities. Several awareness raising and education actions about the Azorean protected bat species are promoted every year by the Azores Natural Parks’ educational services.

SLOVAK REPUBLIC:

In the Slovak Republic, bats (currently 28 bat species occur in Slovakia) are protected under the Act No. 543/2002 Coll. on Nature and Landscape Protection and the Regulation of the Ministry of Environment of the Slovak Republic No. 24/2003 Coll., and are listed in the Red List of Mammals of Slovakia (Žiak & Urban 2001). The Red List categorisation for bat species recorded in Slovakia before 2001 was assessed in 2001 National Red List of Mammals (Žiak & Urban 2001) and no new categorisation has been made during the last years. The draft Red List of Carpathian Mammals (including bats) has been compiled for the Carpathian region in seven countries (coordinated by Slovak specialists) within the BioREGIO Carpathians project (www.cwi.sk/files/zbornik_cervene_zoznamy_final.pdf). Actual overview of the conservation status of habitats and species is available online to both experts and public at the website: www.biomonitoring.sk. Monitoring data represent the basis for the development of reports on the status of species and habitats of European interest according to Article 17 of the Habitats Directive. The official results of reporting are available in the publication “*Conservation status of habitats and species of Community interest in the period of 2007 – 2012 in the Slovak Republic*“. In the Slovak Republic, the realized monitoring consists of repeated collection of data in the field, using standardized methods on defined areas, so-called permanent monitoring localities. For the purpose of collection, processing, evaluation, and publishing of the data from field monitoring, a new IT system has been developed – „*Comprehensive Information and Monitoring System*“ (CIMS), which is managed by the professional staff of the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic (SNC SR). Monitoring is performed by the SNC SR (including the Slovak Caves Administration) as well as in cooperation with members of non-governmental organisations (e.g. Slovak Bat Conservation Society, Slovak Speleological Society). All records and reports are presented in the publication “*Monitoring of Animal Species of Community Interest in the Slovak Republic – Results and Assessment in the period of 2013 – 2015*” (the publication is available at the website of the State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic: <http://www.biomonitoring.sk/CMS/Publication/ListGallery>). The monitoring of *Species of Community Interest* and their habitats, as well as reporting on their conservation status every six years to the European Commission is in the responsibility of the EU Member States.

The SNC SR is working on the process to designate protected areas covering all NATURA2000 sites. In 2017 new protected areas covering NATURA2000 sites with bat species protection have been established. Other NATURA2000 sites with bat species protection are already in place, overlapping existing protected areas (buildings with bat roosts are not included in this network). The total area has increased from 11.9 to 12.6 percent of the territory of the Slovak Republic and the total number of Sites of Community Importance (SCIs) has increased to 642 SCIs (76 of them are for bats). A lot of management activities have been carried out e.g. reconstruction of the entrance of the mines, cleaning of the church`s attics, clearing of guano from the attics of many churches.

A lot of activities have been realized in co-operation with members of the speleological groups e.g. cleaning and closing of underground sites, elimination of the activities leading to disturbance of bats in their roosts. The scientific research is performed especially in the Institute of Forest Ecology of the Slovak Republic, Academy of Sciences in the city of Zvolen, and several universities in cooperation with animal rescue centres. The Conference “*Research and conservation of Mammals in Slovakia*” took place in 2017. The aim of the conference was to present current research results on mammals in Slovakia, including bats, as well as projects carried out by different organisations. Chiropterological seminars were organized in 2014 and 2018 by the NGO Slovak Bat Conservation Society.

The promotion work includes mainly organizing International Bat Night events - SNC SR as well as the NGO Slovak Bat Conservation Society have organised public meetings within the International Bat Night initiative.

SWEDEN:

Out of the 19 bat species found in Sweden, more than half of them are currently on the Red Data List of Sweden. There are worrying records that very commonly occurring species, such as the northern bat *Eptesicus nilssonii*, might be declining in areas where this should not be the case. Further monitoring is needed.

As earlier reported, there have been new facts discovered on which bat species in Sweden are likely to be the most vulnerable around wind turbines.

There are ongoing projects concerning the impact on bats around wind turbines and the distribution of insects, of high-flying insects and bats, and the possibility of reduced mortality of bats around wind turbines using different colours and their

intensity. An update of the Swedish recommendations in a synthesis report concerning bats and wind turbines has now been published.

Apart from other reports on bats and wind turbines, there is also a recently published fact sheet on bats and wind power plants available in Sweden.

There is also a brand-new report on the impact of LED lights on bats and other species: *Effects of Light Emitting Diodes on animals and the natural environment and recommendations: with focus on the Nordic countries and sensitive species and areas.*

There is also a report to illuminate specific knowledge gaps that are considered as potential problems or obstacles for the future development and operation of wind turbines in Sweden. It has been studied if and how two of the bat species, the northern bat *Eptesicus nilssonii* and the barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus*, are affected by operating wind power plants, and, if so, how this potential problem should be handled. The former species is particularly important in the north, where it is often the only occurring bat in wind power areas, while the latter is usually considered in need of special precautions with respect to the wind industry generally.

Later this year, in November 2018, there will be a national conference on bats and infrastructure.

On the International Bat Night 2018, there were many very successful events carried out throughout Sweden. The number of amateur bat scientists in the country is steadily increasing, even if there is no NGO so far. The amount of bat walks and bat talks in the country increases significantly, which in turn helps promoting bats. Following this, the positive interest of the public in bats is clearly increasing.

SWITZERLAND:

Bat protection in Switzerland is supported by the Swiss government and the 26 cantons. Protection efforts concerning monitoring, national databases, supervision of the renovation of buildings with bat roosts, education and public relations are on the level of the previous years. Several bat species remain under great pressure in densely populated Switzerland, especially the attic using ones and the very light sensitive ones.

Important developments to be highlighted are:

1. Implementation of the action plan of *Swiss Biodiversity Strategy* concerning wildlife corridors and bridges (until 2021).
2. Implementation of a GIS-based low-cost method to identify potential flight corridors from settlement into the hunting habitat for 200 very important bat roosts using flight corridors (until 2020).
3. Implementation of the validation standards of the *Swiss Bat Bioacoustic Group* SBBG about bioacoustic evidences.
4. Implementation of a new monitoring and protection program involving volunteers for the three species of the genus *Plecotus* occurring in Switzerland.
5. Implementation of bats (distribution of species, biology, conservation) in a new Swiss mammalian atlas project (publication expected in 2021).
6. Thanks to an education initiative, there are 900 volunteers working to protect bats in Switzerland (mainly monitoring of important bat roosts and public relations).
7. 36 events with more than 5,000 participants have been organised within the *International Bat Night* framework.
8. Through the *World Bat Library* of Geneva, 2,720 new documents have been indexed and made available for the chiropterologists of Switzerland and representatives of the EUROBATS network countries and other regions.

UKRAINE:

Since MoP7 many activities on bat research and conservation as well as public education have taken place. Some of them were done in cooperation with other countries. Few important projects were supported by abroad contributions, among them the project supported by the EUROBATS Project Initiative.

A big amount of new bat data has been obtained during the last years: on occurrence, status of bat species, their roosts. New internationally important underground sites have been identified. New laws, important for bat conservation, have been adopted (in particular the laws about Environment Impact Assessment and about Strategic Environmental Assessment). The work on the development of the Emerald Network has started. All these activities, supported or executed at a voluntary basis, make possible to say that the implementation of the Agreement in Ukraine is ongoing. More details are available in the National Implementation Report submitted to the Secretariat.

UNITED KINGDOM:

On **legislation**, an important focus for the UK is to pass domestic legislation that ensures that all the protections for bats under the EU Habitats Directive remain operable as the United Kingdom leaves the European Union.

A piece of legislation entitled the Bat Habitats Regulation Bill is a private members Bill that would reduce the protection for bats in churches. It is motivated by the serious damage that bat droppings cause to priceless artefacts in medieval churches. The government opposes the Bill because it believes that the bespoke solutions developed by the conservation agencies in collaboration with the Church to overcoming problems in the worst affected churches is a better way forward.

On **policy**, In England, under the agri-environment scheme, the Greater Horseshoe Bat has its own habitat management recommendations. Land managers who maintain land close to Greater Horseshoe Bat maternity colonies are supported to enhance the number and variety of insects available for bat forage. The Bat Conservation Trust and the Vincent Wildlife Trust, who collect data on numbers of bats in summer maternity roosts, have noted a statistically significant increase in the population index, an increase of 162% since 1999.

On **external funding**, in the Back from the Brink Project – funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund – the Bat Conservation Trust is working with other species conservation partners to conserve a range of woodland dwelling bats and their habitats.

Also funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Bats in Churches project, seeks to safeguard the future of protected bat roosts living in hundreds of England's churches whilst reducing their negative impact on these historic buildings and the people who use them.

On **research**, Defra has published the findings of the Bats and Wind Turbines research project undertaken by the University of Exeter. These are being used to revise and update existing advice and guidelines which are expected to be published shortly.

The Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) has launched new practical guidance on considering the impact upon bats when **designing lighting schemes**. They partnered with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) and ecological consultants to write this document on avoiding or reducing the harmful effects which artificial

lighting may have on bats and their habitats. This guidance is available on the ILP website: <https://www.theilp.org.uk/documents/guidance-note-8-bats-and-artificial-lighting/>

On **monitoring**, the status of the UK's bat species is monitored by the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) carried out by Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) on behalf of the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), and supported and steered by Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Northern Ireland Environment Agency, and Scottish Natural Heritage. Over 1,200 volunteers take part in this programme.

Latest trend data, for species that could be monitored, indicates that populations of bat species are stable or recovering, suggesting that current legislation and conservation actions to protect and conserve bats are having a positive impact. However, these trends reflect relatively recent changes in bat populations (since 1999 for most species) and have to be set against historical declines.

In addition to producing species population trends, the data collected via the NBMP are used to better understand how bats use the landscape, which allows providing practical recommendations on how landscapes bats rely on might be better managed for their benefit.

NON-PARTY RANGE STATES

ARMENIA:

Since MoP7 Armenia has done much work on raising public awareness as well as research on conservation, distribution and genetic diversity of bats in Armenia.

During the last four years several small projects have been implemented by bat specialists from universities and NGOs. Among these projects were also those supported by EUROBATS.

An Armenian-German project started in 2013 and is still ongoing. During the last trip in 2018, new places were recorded for *Rhinolophus blasii* and *Barbastella barbastellus* in the southern parts of Armenia.

Last year an Armenian-Belarusian governmental project started, and it will continue in the following years, resulting in phylogeography of bat population of Armenia and Belarus.

For the first time in 2016 Armenia organized International Bat night events and ever since then the International Bat Night is being celebrated in different regions of Armenia.

The Emerald network sites were revised in 2016 and new data on important sites for nine bat species were included.

During the workshop of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) for Armenia (National Experts Workshop, 3-4 July 2018, Yerevan, Armenia), the working group revised the important areas for eight mammals, out of which two were bats species.

This year Armenia participated in the Western Asian Bat network (WABnet) workshop.

Finally, as all caves of Armenia belong to the Ministry of Culture, last year it gave four very important caves (Magel, Areni1, Mozrov, Arjer) for rent. The caves are very important as hibernacula and nursery places for *Barbastella caspica*, *Rh. ferrumequinum*, *Rh. blasii*, *Rh. euryale*, *Miniopterus pallidus*.

AZERBAIJAN:

Azerbaijan is a party to 20 environmental conventions and protocols. The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species has not yet been ratified. Since MoP7, NGO and scientific community representatives have had three

meetings with the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources officials to discuss EUROBATS Agreement ratification perspectives. The feedback provided by the recently re-organized Ministry management during the last meeting was that the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources recognized the importance of joining the CMS Convention and the EUROBATS Agreement. Unfortunately, there were some technical and organizational barriers which would hopefully be solved in the nearest future. It is planned to have another progress meeting in December 2018 with the Legislation department of the Ministry. On June 12, 2018, the Azerbaijani government signed the decree on the application of the law on Environmental Impact Assessment, which came into force immediately. This law also contains the section about transboundary environmental impact assessment.

A three-year project on “bio-ecological peculiarities and the cytogenetic research of some rodent and bat species of the south-eastern part of Azerbaijan” finished in 2017. Since then the Institute of Zoology has launched a new research programme on the existing and potential habitat range mapping of some Red Data Book species. Four bat species with higher protection status are also being covered by the scope of this work. From 33 bat species registered in Azerbaijan, 12 are in the Red Data Book of the republic. Within the framework of UNDP, a short-term project has been launched on mammals investigation in the four National Parks of Azerbaijan located on the migration routes along the eastern coast of the Caspian sea. The scope of this project covers also pre-dominant bat species inhabiting the investigated national parks. However, there is no established systematic or sustainable monitoring process for bats in Azerbaijan. The studies are conducted very randomly, non-systematically, and the shortcoming regarding bat experts’ availability remains the same for many years.

Since the last reporting period, three International Bat Night events have been celebrated for a certain group of audience by one of the NGOs.

BELARUS:

Compared to the previous one, in the period between 2014 and 2018 there have been quite some bat related events worth reporting:

1. Firstly, the fourth edition of the Red Data Book has been published and there were 8 species of bats included (*B.barbastella*, *M. mystacinus*, *M. nattereri*, *M. brandtii*, *M. dasycneme*, *Pl. austriacus*, *N.leisleri* and *E nilssonii*).

2. In 2015 *N. lasiopterus* was registered in Belarus for the first time since 1930. Consequently, research of *N. lasiopterus* on the territory of Palesse, supported by the Frankfurt Zoological Society and EUROBATS, has started and is still ongoing. Several years ago, *N. lasiopterus* was excluded from the Red Data Book due to the lack of data and alleged absence of this species in Belarus, however, the propositions to include *N. lasiopterus* in the new edition of the Red Data Book are again being prepared.
3. Research on species composition and genetic structure of *Pipistrellus* and *Myotis* species complexes are running in the National Academy of Sciences as well as a joint Armenian-Belarusian project entitled «Phylogeographic analysis of bat populations of Belarus and Armenia». Finally, bat research within the framework of the project “Palesse – Europe's largest wilderness area”, supported by the Frankfurt Zoological Society and partners, has started.
4. The following popularization activities have been carried out:
 - International Bat Nights were held in different cities of Belarus;
 - Popular bat-lectures were held in more than 10 cities;
 - Lots of interviews were given, articles were published, etc.;
 - The workshop “Bats of Belarus” for the researchers of “Narachanski” National Park was held in 2015;
 - The workshop “The role of forest ecosystems for the conservation of bat populations” for the researchers and foresters of “Bielavezhszkaja Puschcha” National Park was held.
5. The first Belarusian bat rehabilitation center, called “Kazhanapolis”, has officially been opened in Minsk this year.
6. Concerning the progress of Belarus joining the EUROBATS Agreement, according to the National Action Plan for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity, the Ministry of Natural Resource must prepare and present to the Government the rationale for Belarus joining EUROBATS by the end of 2018. The preparation of all necessary documents is currently underway.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA:

In the previous period the winter bat monitoring has continued, and it was spread to several caves with significant colonies. Two annual bat monitorings have been

completed, one for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (one of the state entities) and another for one protected area near Sarajevo. The number of species of bats in Bosnia and Herzegovina is 31. The new species is *Myotis alcatoe*.

The Journal for bat research on the Balkans "*Hypsugo*" has continued to be released. Together with bat workers from Slovakia, Hungary and Poland the project *Let's be friendly to bats together* has been finalised. Within this project a regional conference „Conservation status of Bats in the Central Europe and Western Balkan“ was organised in Sarajevo as well as a field training in Bijambare protected area. More than 40 participants from 8 countries attended the conference. In September 2018 the International Bat Night was celebrated and the booklet "Bats" was printed for this occasion. Finally, the good news that Bosnia and Herzegovina has completed its accession to the Agreement.

IRAN:

Iran has participated in EUROBATS meetings since 2012 as a Non-Party Range State. Based on the last report there are at least 54 bat species in Iran (Benda et al., 2012), only one of which is a frugivore (*Rousettus aegyptiacus*) and the rest are insectivores. Several activities related to bats should be highlighted, including scientific research, conservational efforts, and public awareness raising:

1. In addition to some scientific publications and an educational plan, a survey on bats and their habitat status in the Zagros Mountain area has started. It appears that *Rhinopoma microphyllum* is the most common species in this area. Grills were put on some caves entrance in southern Zagros.
2. Cooperation among local DOE (Department of Environment) activities for protecting caves as bat roosts has taken place for first time, as a result of several official and unofficial meetings with related organizations (CMS, DOE, cave society, and biodiversity museum).
3. A translation of the bat rehabilitation protocols has been finalised and is now awaiting the Department of Environment's acceptance.
4. Cooperation of cavers for bat conservation and education has taken place.
5. Bat education and public awareness raising have been conducted by using social networking and a radio show (social media applications such as Telegram under the name of Young Life Café).

6. Conservation and educational activities have been undertaken in relation to a recent bat and mercury story in some parts of Iran, and a bat documentary movie with RUFFORD`s grant and Persia bat support is being prepared.

JORDAN:

Since the last two years, many activities in terms of research and developing strategies for windfarms on bats took place:

1. A document on the cumulative effects assessment on migratory birds and bats has been published by the International Finance Corporation. The representative of Jordan, Professor Zuhair Sami Amr, participated in this document by technical input on bats and their habitats. This document can be downloaded through: https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/8229c744-e1db-48fc-a9cc-7fac3ae4110d/CEA+Report+2-16-17+web_w+new+cover.pdf?MOD=AJPERES.
2. Monitoring programs for newly established windfarms in Jordan is by now mandatory.
3. Jordan participated in Bat One Health Research Network meeting in Tbilisi, Georgia, in September 17-20, 2018.

Regarding research, the following should be highlighted:

1. Work is being done on a library for bat calls in Jordan covering over 20 species, the results of which will be published.
2. A project for one year on “Seasonal habitat selection and temporal activity patterns determine the structure of bat assemblages in Dhana Biosphere Reserve, Jordan (Mammalia: Chiroptera)” has been performed and a manuscript has been accepted for publication.
3. Blood and nasal swaps from four bat species have been collected for screening for viral agents.
4. The regional Red List for the mammals of Jordan is in its final stages, awaiting funds for its publication.

KAZAKHSTAN:

The last basic bat research was made about 40 years ago. According to this study 25 species of bats live in Kazakhstan. Five of them are listed in the Red Book of Kazakstan (*Широкоухий складчатогуб (Tadarida teniotis)*, *Азиатская широкоушка (Barbastella leucomelas)*, *Кожанок бобринского (Eptesicus*

bobrinskii), *Белобрюхий стрелоух* (*Otonycteris hemprichi*), *Ночница Иконникова* (*Myotis Ikonnikovi*).

Currently, there is no proper research on bats conducted in Kazakhstan. For example, there is a group of virologists who work in Kazakhstan and their work is also related to bats, but, unfortunately, there are no actual bat studies.

At the moment, a workshop is being prepared for scientist and students who are interested in research on bats.

LEBANON:

Several points should be highlighted:

1. **Wind Farms:** The Lebanese Ministry of Environment requires assessment for bats within the developed areas. Hence, environment impact assessments for the project are still being carried out and EUROBATS guidelines on wind farms will be applied.
2. **Bat Monitoring:** The large colony of *Myotis myotis* that was recorded for the first time in Lebanon and was reported during the previous AC meeting was destroyed, and most bats were killed or shot in July 2018. However, last week the cave was visited, and some six individuals returned back. There is hope that through the windfarm project there will be an opportunity to stop human access to the cave.
3. **Training:**
 - A training on bat detectors (AnaBat) has been conducted by Chris Corben for volunteers and university students.
 - Lebanon participated in the WAB.net in Tbilisi, Georgia.
4. **Public awareness** raising is ongoing through the Animal Encounter Center and through a children's magazine. The celebration of the International Bat Night in 2018 was very successful. We were asked to contribute to many of these big festivals that occur throughout the country.
5. On the point of **joining EUROBATS**, there has been some positive advancement.

MOROCCO:

Moroccan work on bats has continued as planned, with emphasis on the increased expansion of wind turbines projects following EUROBATS guidelines.

The event of the year 2018 in Morocco was the organization of a workshop on bat conservation in Northwestern Africa last July. This workshop was organized by the Agronomic and Veterinary Institute Hassan II Rabat under the umbrella and financial support of EUROBATS. The workshop aimed at promoting stakeholders' awareness and capacity building for bat conservation in Northwestern Africa as well as at encouraging wildlife biologists in bat research and conservation.

Fifty participants attended the workshop, including Algerian and Tunisian scientists, and three French scientists with knowledge on bats of Northwestern Africa. The Moroccan participants were stakeholders and the majority of the actors dealing with bat conservation, such as the Ministries of Forest, Environment, Tourism, etc., universities and research institutes, ECWP and NGO members.

The result of the workshop is a program of work on Maghreb countries:

1. Improvement of knowledge as identification of interesting sites for bats biodiversity, habitats study and developing a key for determining Maghreb bats;
2. Training of managers, NGOs, and speleologists;
3. Conservation by identification of urgent actions to be undertaken and environmental education and awareness raising;
4. Communication and dissemination of knowledge.

A video from the workshop will be sent to EUROBATS, together with a report on the workshop.

Finally, the representative of Morocco, Professor El Ayachi Sehhar, thanked EUROBATS and the Secretariat for their support and guidance, the Director of the Agronomic and Veterinary Institute for providing wide facilities, Dr. Stéphane Aulagnier for his continuous help, and the NGO Réseau Minioptère for funds management.

SAUDI ARABIA:

In Saudi Arabia, bats capturing efforts have continued in various regions of the country, with emphasis on the southwest, a world recognized hot spot. The aim of this continuous field work is to update the distribution of Saudi bats along with their status. Bats identification has expanded to a molecular level including bats phylogeography. Saudi Wildlife Authority held a workshop in 2018 to update the Red List of the Mammals of Saudi Arabia which would be published soon.

Screening for the presence of MERS-CoV in several bat species has continued, all screened species were negative. The unusual summer heat in 2018 raises concerns about bats tolerance to withstand the increased summer heat above their higher critical temperature point. This issue probably requires an immediate monitoring program throughout the southern part of EUROBATS Range States as it might cause range shift/expansion, especially for range-restricted species.

SERBIA:

The following points should be highlighted:

1. The Law on ratification of the EUROBATS Agreement is on the Agenda of the current parliamentary session (along with AEWA and some other treaties related to nature and environment protection). The Ministry of Environmental Protection is responsible for environmental issues in Serbia.
2. The bat roost monitoring project funded by the Ministry has continued for the third year; within the scope of the project a new roost site of *Rhinolophus mehelyi* and the largest hibernaculum of *Rhinolophus hipposideros* have been discovered in Serbia.
3. The presence of *Tadarida teniotis* in Serbia has been confirmed and published and now the national bat fauna contains 31 species.
4. The reviewing procedure for the book “Bat Fauna of Serbia” has been finalized, and the book should be published by the end of 2018 by the Serbian Academy of Science and Arts.
5. Bat rescue and rehabilitation activities have been continued by the group of bat experts together with volunteers, and there is an initiative to establish an official national bat rescue and rehabilitation centre within the Natural History Museum in Belgrade.
6. International Bat Night in 2017 was a well-established event in Serbia, engaging more than 3,000 participants and having a good media coverage.
7. Events within the scope of IBN 2018 are still ongoing.

TUNISIA:

Several points need to be emphasized:

1. A survey for the mapping of natural and artificial caves in Tunisia has revealed that several of the caves have been closed by the Ministry of Defense due to security

issues. These caves were previously considered as roosting sites for breeding colonies. This should be considered as an urgent issue and the representative of Tunisia, Dr. Awatef Abiadh, is in contact with an NGO for speleology to raise awareness of decision makers in order to draw their attention to the problem.

2. Several wind farms are planned in the upcoming 10 years in Tunisia. The bat study has been mainstreamed in Environmental Impact Assessment required by the donors, however, monitoring plans has not been cleared yet.
3. Joining the EUROBATS Agreement in an ongoing discussion with the new director of the Direction General des Foret and the new CMS focal point.
4. Public awareness raising activities have continued by celebrating the International Bat Night in three places with 150-200 participants for each event. The events were also covered in the local and national media, as well as in the social networks.
5. Dr. Abiadh attended the “Bat Conservation in the Maghreb” workshop, organized in Rabat, and she actively participated in setting up priorities for bat conservation in North Africa.

TURKEY:

There is no current news about the ratification of the Agreement. Presently, a study is being conducted which investigates the evolutionary history of *Myotis nattereri* complex, covering almost its whole distribution range. This study focuses on the biogeography of this species complex and also provides information about the taxonomy and conservation implications for this species complex. The genetic comparisons suggest that population in the Middle East and the Caucasus represent distinct species.

OBSERVERS

La Société Française pour l'Etude et la Protection des Mammifères, France, (SFEPM):

Since the French mammal society (SFEPM) provided a written report at every AC meeting since the last MoP, only the most recent actions will be pointed out:

1. An update of the National Red List has been prepared, with a change of the status for some bat species;
2. The new National Action Plan is being implemented by SFEPM regional bat groups;
3. Research on *Nyctalus lasiopterus* is ongoing and a new mountain range with breeding females has been found, this time in the Pyrenees;
4. Species specific bat houses start being built in France, mainly for *Rhinolophus* species;
5. On the front of Wind Turbines, the SFEPM working group is still active;
6. For the International Bat Night, 290 events were recorded in 2018.

Naturschutzbund, Germany, (NABU):

NABU continues its various activities on communication and education on bats. The NABU homepage offers a variety of advice on bats, such as the so-called "Bat Hotline", which was established in 2016. The great and steadily increasing success of this helpline clearly indicates the increasingly deep concern of people for bat protection.

The campaign „Bats welcome“ acknowledges efforts in bat conservation and protection by private house owners and exists since many years in most of the Länder.

A project called "Bat cities", co-funded by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation by means of the Federal Ministry, was initiated from 2016 to 2018. It aimed to promote bat protection in urban areas, as well as acquiring and training new bat workers, especially in some chosen cities. Because of the great success of this project funding will be continued in 2019 by NABU.

The 22. International Bat Night in August 2018 was celebrated in Germany with the main event taking place in the NABU owned „Mayener Grubenfeld“, where

more than 500 people came to see bats swarming at the underground cavities. Furthermore, more than 200 local events were organized by NABU groups.

In accordance with EUROBATS Resolution 8.10 on „Required Experience and Skills of Experts with Regard to Quality of Assessments“, some NABU groups started training courses for consultants to improve knowledge on bat identification and bat ecology.

In March 2018, a workshop on „Evidence-Based Bat Protection“ was cooperatively organized in Berlin by IZW (Leibniz-Institut für Zoo- und Wildtierforschung), NABU and the Bundesverband für Fledermauskunde. Presentations and discussions were held on topics such as renovations of buildings, agriculture and silviculture, the use of bat boxes, traffic infrastructures, light pollution, standardized bat monitoring, public relation work and training of bat workers. The next workshop of the same organizers will be held in March 2019 on „Evidence-Based Bat Protection and Wind Energy Projects“.

NABU continues to be a member of BatLife Europe.

Naturalis Biodiversity Center, the Netherlands, (NBC):

NBC reported on the progress of the cooperation with the Schmalhausen Institute of Zoology in Kiev on passive rabies surveillance in Ukraine. The results of this surveillance would be published in the following year. Furthermore, it was also reported on the progress of the research into corona viruses in bats in Ukraine and some other countries.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN):

IUCN reported that the European bats had been re-assessed for their IUCN Red List Status and that this would be available under a new Red List web platform in November 2018.

Furthermore, Professor Paul Racey as the Convener of the IWG on Communication, Bat Conservation and Public health informed the meeting about the establishment of the Western Asia Bat Research Network, funded by the US Defense Threat Reduction Agency.

WAB-net aims to strengthen research in Western Asia by collaboration, lab exchanges, data sharing and capacity- building workshops. The inaugural

workshop was held in Tblisi, Georgia, 17-19th September 2018, and was attended by seven members of the EUROBATS Advisory Committee.

Its primary objectives (2018-2022) are to characterise bat coronaviruses across Western Asia, to analyse and map bat pathogen spillover risk and to strengthen regional scientific capacity and collaboration.

WAB-net provides opportunities for collaboration with those members of the EUROBATS community who are also involved in surveillance of zoonotic diseases in bats.

Bat Conservation Trust, United Kingdom, (BCT):

Only a few BCT projects that have progressed since the last Advisory Committee meeting in May 2018 will be highlighted.

At the previous EUROBATS meeting BCT mentioned its Partnership for Biodiversity in Planning project, which comprises 19 organisations representing the conservation, planning and development sectors. One of the key outputs from this project is a web-based planning tool designed to be used by actors in the planning process who do not have ecological expertise, for example, householders, small developers and architects. They should use the tool at the pre-application stage to find out if ecological expertise is needed, and if it is, it will allow them to carry out surveys early in the process and avoid delays at a later stage. This tool is currently being tested and BCT hopes to launch it in November 2018.

BCT has just completed the second and final season of fieldwork for its mitigation project, surveying a total of 71 mitigation sites across England and Wales. This project looked at the effectiveness of roost mitigation in buildings, and a report on the results will be published this winter.

BCT is currently updating its Professional Training Standards for consultants. In line with this, BCT is also working with Natural England (the statutory agency in England) and CIEEM (a professional body for ecological consultants in the UK), to create a competency framework linked to bat mitigation licensing. BCT hopes that once this is developed and implemented, it will provide better outcomes for bats, ecologists and developers.

In the week of MoP8 BCT will be holding a Symposium on Strategic Planning for Landscape Scale Conservation (looking at bats and other species). Some of the talks should be made available on the BCT website.

BatLife Europe:

The organization is now registered as a Stichting in the Netherlands. It is in the long process of registering trustees for the new organisation and has set up a new bank account in the Netherlands. It will be invoicing for fees for 2017 and 2018 together in November 2018.

BatLife is still engaged in preparing an update of the European Hibernacula indicator. It has now received trends from more than 30 countries/regions and would like to thank those who have provided their data. The first results have now been calculated and will be shared soon with partners that provided data for review and analysis.

BatLife Europe has a new Bat of the Year for 2018 AND 2019 – the lesser horseshoe bat. It has produced infographics highlighting the specific behaviours of this species per season: diet, reproduction, etc.

BatLife Europe and its partners were previously involved in the preparation of the EU Bat Action plan and are concerned about the lack of progress of adopting and implementing the action plan. BatLife will be writing a letter of concern to DG Environment asking for swift action.

BatLife is currently revamping its websites and welcomes contributions: news of different country or NGO bat conservation efforts.

BatLife Europe is an umbrella organisation for the 36 NGOs that are its partners and is always ready to act on their behalf. While the organisation is not a direct-action group, under its objective of being an international voice for bats, it is able to give advice or support, mention issues through social media and both send and promote others sending protest letters to governments. BatLife Europe invites NGOs to contact it if they could make use of its support.

Before splitting into two Working Groups, the Chair of the Administrative Working Group explained that during the last joint meeting of the Advisory and the Standing Committees a request was made to invite also the administrative focal points of

Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as Serbia to MoP8, these countries being close to finalising their accession process. The Chair proposed to extend the invitation to the administrative focal points of these countries to join the Administrative Working Group. This proposal was supported, and the representatives were welcomed to participate in the Administrative Working Group as observers.

14. Report of the Credentials Committee

Before going through all Draft Resolutions and adopting them, the Credentials Committee reported that there were 25 Parties that submitted proper credentials.

15. Draft Resolution 8.1: Financial and Administrative Matters (Budget 2019 - 2022) (DoC.EUROBATS.MoP8.9.Rev.1)

Before discussing Draft Resolution 8.1, the Administrative Working Group decided to have a closer look at the income and expenditure over the last four years. The Executive Secretary introduced the documents Inf.EUROBATS.MoP8.5 and Inf.EUROBATS.MoP8.6 – the reports on income and expenditure for 2014 as well as for 2015-2017.

The first document needed to be endorsed at this MoP as the report could not have been finalised for the previous session. The Executive Secretary commented that, with regard to income, almost all annual contributions had been received as well as significant voluntary contributions from Belgium, Luxembourg, Switzerland, and Germany to be used for projects and other purposes. Regarding expenditure, Mr. Streit explained that the strong Euro in that year resulted in significant savings at the end of the financial year, which would normally be carried forward, except for 2014 when they went into the trust fund. The savings amounted to almost 53,000 EUR. In conclusion, it was decided to endorse the expenditure report for 2014. Israel asked whether this report would also be presented in the plenary. Mr. Panis explained that this was not usually done unless a Party insisted on that. Belgium asked to have it presented in the plenary session. Poland was willing to show the document to the plenary for adoption but would prefer to avoid another discussion on it.

The Working Group then proceeded with the report for the financial years 2015-2017. Similarly, the report presented an overview of income and expenditure, as well as an overview of all the voluntary contributions the Secretariat received in those years. Regarding expenditure, Mr. Streit stated that 2015 ended with a

surplus, not as big as in 2014, and mainly generated due to the savings on the staff costs (calculated for professional staff in USD). On the other budget lines, such as the one for meetings, there was a deficit, but the overall budget performance was good.

In 2016 the savings were small. The value of the Euro declined, which resulted in some over-expenditure on the professional staff budget lines, but which was compensated by the budget lines for the general staff. It was pointed out that staff costs had not changed but the exchange rate did, and since the staff costs for professional staff were computed in USD, it automatically resulted in a minus.

In 2017, when the exchange rate problem fully materialised, there was an over-expenditure in the professional staff budget lines. Additionally, a payment for IT services did not happen in 2016 but in 2017 for both years, so there was an over-expenditure in that budget line as well. The total over-expenditure was ca. 30,000 EUR. Poland asked for the final balance. Mr. Streit explained that this could only be seen in relation to the trust fund status. He concluded that the overall shortfall for 2016 and 2017 was ca. 37,000 EUR.

France asked about the projection of the situation for 2018. Mr. Streit explained that, apart from staff cost budget lines, all the other lines would be on zero. However, in the staff costs a deficit of ca. 45,000 USD was expected. Mr. Panis asked whether Inf.EUROBATS.MoP8.6 could also be endorsed and presented to the plenary and there were no objections to it.

The Executive Secretary proceeded to present Inf.EUROBATS:MoP8.7, the trust fund status report as of 31.12.2017. It showed the total of 236,876 USD as the trust fund reserve. Out of this amount a mandatory reserve of 85,837 USD could not be touched, resulting in the total amount of 151,139 USD at the Parties' disposal. Considering that significant withdrawals were part of the budget for the last quadrennium and that only one part of the budget was covered by the contributions (175,471 EUR were planned to be withdrawn from the trust fund), there had been concerns that the trust fund would be depleted. Fortunately, this did not happen, and the trust fund reserve was still in a healthy condition. A part of it would be needed for the future budget as well, however, not the same amount could be used as for the last quadrennium. Additionally, Mr. Streit explained that not the full amount as decided by the last resolution had been withdrawn, since during the first two years of the quadrennium savings were made. Based on the

projection as to how the current year would end, there would be not more than 100,000 USD at disposal in the trust fund. Mentioning the status of contributions as of 31.09.2018, Mr. Streit said that many Parties had paid their contributions, however, 54,000 EUR were still outstanding.

Mr. Streit then proceeded with the Resolution 8.1 – the document had not changed since the joint meeting of the Standing and Advisory Committees in May, apart from the 3rd budget option which was included in the draft upon the request of the joint meeting. Mr. Streit then offered a summary of the entire background for those participants who could not attend the last meeting in Tallinn. For 12 years the EUROBATS contributions had been frozen, with the side effect that the UN scale of contributions had not been applied. The UN scale had the big advantage that it was adopted by the UN General Assembly and those discussions did not have to be repeated on a lower level. During the last MoP the wish was expressed to return to the UN scale of contributions and a more equitable sharing of the burden among the Parties. The Standing Committee had worked hard to achieve this in the past years. In the view of significant changes in the UN scale over the last 12 years, it was not possible to switch to the UN scale at once, as for one third of the Parties this would be mean heavy increases. The increase in absolute amounts were not dramatic, but the increase in percentage was significant, and therefore a gradual return to the UN scale was necessary. Another important factor for budget discussion was the status of the trust fund – only to a smaller extent had it changed due to the use of the funds, but more significantly due to the exchange rate developments. However, overall the trust fund reserve was still healthy. Yet another factor to be taken into consideration was the minimum contribution and its adjustment to the level used by other conventions. Similarly to the gradual return to the UN scale of contributions, the adjustment of the minimum contribution would also be proposed to be gradual. Finally, there was also the component of staff costs. In the calculation of these costs the UN standards were not being applied. It was the decision of the Parties not to apply these standards but to calculate the costs based on the actual expenditure with some contingency to compensate for the fluctuation in the exchange rate or similar unforeseen circumstances. The staff costs did not change and the only increase were the imminent annual step increments for all the staff members, except for the Executive Secretary.

Mr. Streit then proceeded to present the three scenarios prepared by the StC. All the scenarios had an A and a B version for the budget, which were identical, the only difference being the transition period in which the full application of the UN scale would be reached. In A scenarios this period was four years and in B scenarios it was five years. Setting the transitional period to 5 years would ease the process for those affected, but more funds would be required from the trust fund to fill in the gap arising from the fact that the contributions would not cover the whole budget.

Scenario 1 represented the status quo, with the only difference that 10,000 EUR for the projects were taken out of the regular budget. Considering that a new annual voluntary contribution of Switzerland had come on board, it was no longer necessary to have the funds for projects set aside from the regular budget.

Scenario 2 was aiming to address the most urgent needs in the operation of the Agreement. This included moderately more funds for the organisation of the meetings as the funds allocated to the meetings had never been sufficient, and some more funds for Secretariat travel, because that budget figure was also very tightly calculated in the past. The Secretariat staff did not travel often, but there were a few international conferences where the presence would be very useful and required. And finally, the most important change was increasing the post occupancy of the scientist at the Secretariat to 80 percent. Considering his tasks such as national reporting system, EPI projects, publications, even 100 percent post occupancy would be needed, but in view of the return to the UN scale and in order to remain realistic, a proposal of increase of the post occupancy to 80 percent would be made.

Scenario 3 emerged at the joint meeting in May. It was identical to scenario 2 by increasing the funds for the organisation of the meetings and for staff travel costs but leaving the post of the scientific officer at 50 percent.

Mr Streit concluded that the increase in the contributions in percentages were not caused by the increase in the budget as much as by the return to UN scale. The suggested budget increase was in fact very moderate.

Italy reiterated its position from the last Standing Committee meeting– it could not consider scenarios based on the current UN scale of contributions and wanted to wait for the scales for the following period.

Mr. Streit explained that the UN scale of contributions was adopted every three years at the end of the period. The new scale of contributions would be adopted in December 2018 for the period of 2019-2021. Usually the new scale did not include significant changes in comparison to the previous one. In addition to the fact that EUROBATS also wanted to have a gradual increase to reach the full application of the UN scale, the change would not be dramatic for any government. Italy could choose to abstain, however, EUROBATS could not wait to adopt the budget in January next year. As suggested in Tallinn, Italy could contact its permanent representative in New York to gather more information as to the expected changes with the new scale.

Mr. Panis then suggested that there were two main issues to be discussed – which scenario was preferred as well as which transition period. He proposed to firstly have a discussion on the transition period.

The following countries were in favour of a 4-year-transition: Belgium, France, Latvia, Luxembourg; Macedonia, Monaco, Norway, Sweden (both options ok); UK (both options ok); Finland (both options ok); Denmark (prefer 4, but 5 years were also ok), Croatia, Bulgaria, Moldova, Malta.

In favour of a 5-year-transition were Poland, Portugal, the Slovak Republic, Germany, Georgia, the Czech Republic.

Sweden commented that if MoP8 decided for a five-year-transition, it was possible that at another MoP something else would be decided. In the end it was always a 4-year-decision since there was not a way to foresee what would be decided by the next MoP. Mr. Streit commented that in the case of 5 years, the full application of the UN scale would only materialise in 2023. If the Parties decided for 4 years, they would have a complete picture before the next MoP.

In further remarks it was explained that Scenario 2B – due to the withdrawal from the trust fund of 164,000 EUR – was not a plausible option.

Germany suggested that this was also the case for Scenario 2A. Mr. Panis explained that the shortfall was small, and that it could be covered by the accession of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Panis then opened the debate on the preferred scenarios by explaining the position of Belgium – it wanted a realistic and comprehensive budget for the next quadrennium, was in favour of the transition in four steps as this would put less

restrain on the trust fund and supported the raise of the minimum contribution to 2,000 EUR if enough Parties would agree to it. Belgium would also prefer to increase the post occupancy of P2 to 80 percent.

Sweden preferred the scenario 2A. Poland, being one of the countries most affected by the return to the UN scale, was ready to consider a 4-year transition, but scenario 2 was unacceptable, as in this case their contribution would rise for 40 percent. Finland commented that it was not one of the big payers, and that, though it understood the need for the increase in scientific support, it sympathised with the countries that would be quite affected by scenario 2A, so it would opt for scenario 3. Bulgaria could accept scenario 2A. Denmark agreed with Finland and would prefer 3A. Germany could not accept scenario 2 but could think about supporting scenario 3A. France had the instruction to support scenario 1A, as the scenario 2A would imply an increase in contribution, which in percentage was not that big, but nominally implied an increase of 43,000 EUR. For Luxembourg all scenarios were acceptable, but 2A was the preferable one, as it would like to see an increase in the post occupancy of the P2 position. Latvia agreed with Luxembourg as well as Croatia, that could accept every scenario, but was eager to see a better facilitation of the work of the Advisory Committee through increasing the post occupancy of the scientific officer. Monaco was in favour of 2A but could accept all scenarios. Monaco also joined Croatia in asking for more scientific support. Macedonia was in favour of 2A. For the UK all scenarios were acceptable, however, it would regret if the MoP would decide to go with the scenario 1A or 1B as these foresaw no funds for projects in the regular budget. If scenario 2A was not an option, the UK would then plead to at least go for scenario 3A.

After it became obvious that no consensus could be reached, it was decided to look for a compromise, and new scenarios – 4A and 4B – were proposed. For the first two years, the new scenarios were identical to the scenarios 3A and 3B: The budget lines for the meetings and the staff travel would be increased, but in the first two years the scientific officer would remain on the 50 percent post occupancy. Only in the last two last years the post occupancy of the scientific officer would be increased to 80 percent. These scenarios would have to be combined with a call for additional voluntary contributions to be able to cover the gap between the budget needed and the regular contributions.

France and Denmark commented that it would be difficult to get any feedback from the governments on the new scenarios during the meeting. Mr. Panis urged the delegates to try to do so.

Finland commented that though scenario 4A was a step in the right direction, and though there was a need to increase the post occupancy of the scientific officer, it would suggest returning to scenario 3 and asking for support through voluntary contributions for the increase of the P2 post occupancy. Denmark supported Finland and the scenario 3A. France, still having a major increase in its contribution, could maybe support 3A, but that would be the maximum. Poland was also in favour of 3A.

Mr. Panis stated that there was a tendency to support scenario 3A, but this did not address the concern expressed by many Parties that the scientific support had to be increased. Maybe it would be possible to get another version of the scenario where the post occupancy would increase only in the year before the MoP, as was practically the current situation.

Sweden commented that relying on the voluntary contributions for the day to day work was a dangerous way to take, as there was no possibility to plan whether voluntary contributions would be available or not. France replied that several positions in the AEWA Secretariat were supported through voluntary contributions. The Executive Secretary reminded the delegates of what Mr. Panis mentioned, that the post occupancy of P2 would have to be increased in the last year before the MoP and this would happen whether it was foreseen by the budget or not. In case the budget did not allow for it, the funds would have to be taken from the reserve. Mr. Panis then asked whether anybody was against checking what implications the increase in the post occupancy of the P2 officer in the last year before the MoP would have a look on the contributions. Finland explained that this would still not solve the problem, and it might be better to look for other budget lines, even smaller ones, where savings could be made. Mr. Panis explained that there were no cuts that could be made without damaging the whole system. France commented that it was not worth developing another scenario, as France had strict instructions not to go beyond scenario 3A. The UK suggested that if the figures were not drastically different, it should not be a problem to obtain the government's approval. Croatia reminded the delegates that the nominal differences in the

contributions between different scenarios were not drastic for most of the countries.

France then raised the point that Scenario 4B was not plausible as the withdrawal from the trust fund would be too high. Mr. Streit explained that he would have to do the projection of the costs for this year and to check the figures for the staff costs to see whether there was some margin left. This would be a boarder-line case but not completely impossible.

Mr. Panis asked if there were any other proposals. Poland stated that it was trying to find a compromise, and, for this reason, it would be willing to support the scenario 4B. Mr. Panis explained that, even in this case, it would still be necessary to ask for voluntary contributions. Bulgaria asked why, though the majority was for a 4-year-transition, a turn was again made to a 5-year-transition and whether this would have negative implications, considering that the transition would not be completed within the quadrennium. Mr. Streit clarified that budget-wise a longer transition period would not do any harm, but that full application of the UN scale would materialise only after the 4-year-period. After some discussion the Secretariat was asked to prepare: 1.) a scenario in which the post occupancy of the scientific officer would be increased to 80 percent only in the last year of the quadrennium and 2.) a projection of the costs for the current year and its implications for the trust fund in order to be able to see whether the scenario 4B was doable.

Italy in the meantime received a draft version of the new UN scale of contributions starting from 2019, which was showed to the participants for information. Consequently, Mr. Streit explained the expenditure projection he was asked to prepare in consideration of the plausibility of the scenario 4B. He pointed out that the projection was highly speculative. It was based on the average exchange rate between the Euro and the USD from the beginning of the year until October 2018, which could change to better or to worse. It was pointed out that the surplus the projection was showing could ideally be used as savings, but that these could not be relied upon. The small amount of the surplus also showed that the staff costs were tightly calculated. Being asked why the projection only showed the staff costs and no other budget lines, the Executive Secretary explained that this was because savings could only made on the budget lines for staff costs and because these budget lines presented approximately 75 percent of the entire budget.

It was discussed that scenario 4B would only be viable if there would be voluntary contributions to cover the needs in the budget. The needs to cover amounted to 168,000 EUR. Since ca. 127,000 EUR were at disposition from the trust fund, a gap of 40,000 EUR had to be funded from the voluntary contributions in case of scenario 4B. The question was raised whether it would be plausible to expect to find 40,000 EUR support in voluntary contributions, i.e. 10,000 EUR per year. Mr. Panis reminded the delegates that another important point was to give the Standing Committee a mandate to intervene in case the trust fund was being overstretched.

France found the scenario 4B risky and it was not comfortable with relying on voluntary contributions. The UK also saw a problem in the solution involving voluntary contributions, as these mostly needed to be spent within the same fiscal year in which they were given. Mr. Panis explained that scenario 4B also meant that everything that could be spent from the trust fund would be spent, however, that the StC would have the mandate to say that the P2 post could not be increased if the funds were not available. Mr. Streit also emphasised that in case of 4B the Standing Committee would have two years to monitor the situation and decide whether the P2 post occupancy could be increased in the 3rd year.

It was summarised that there were three scenarios still available for discussion: 3A, 5A and 4B. Since Germany objected to scenario 5A, it was excluded from the options. As the majority of the participants were in favour of scenario 4B, the delegates were asked to hold consultations with their governments if this option was acceptable.

France was not in favour of 4B as there were many uncertainties involved (voluntary contributions, 5 years transition, etc.) and would prefer 3A with the possibility of the Standing Committee to allow a withdrawal from the trust fund to finance the position of the scientific officer in the last year before the MoP.

The Slovak republic agreed to both scenarios, although it had a slight preference for 3A. Unless there were no further scenarios, the Slovak republic would accept both. In case they had to leave the meeting before the consensus was reached, they wanted their position to be taken note of. Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark also had a slight preference for the scenario 3A.

Italy was unfavourable to any scenario that does not provide for the application of the new UN scale of assessment from January 2019.

Croatia reminded that the post of the scientific officer would be very much needed in the next quadrennium, especially in the light of all the changes discussed during the plenary session. For this reason, Croatia was in favour of 4B. The position of Croatia was supported by the UK, Monaco, Bulgaria, Georgia, Poland, Macedonia, Moldova, Malta, Czech Republic, Germany, Luxembourg, and Belgium.

The Chair summarised that the majority of the delegates was in favour of 4B. The Chair then asked if those who could accept both scenarios would agree to 4B as well. This was the case for Sweden, Denmark and Finland. Subsequently, the Chair asked which countries could accept scenario 4B. Since all countries could accept to submit the scenario to the vote, the Chair concluded that scenario 4B would be put forward to the plenary. The text of the Draft Resolution was then prepared. In relation to point 6 it was discussed whether some sanctions could be included for those Parties that had significant arrears in contributions. Subsequently, point 7 and 8 were included in the Draft Resolution and it was decided to also add a point on this subject to the Rules of Procedure for the next MoP. After some additional changes in the text were done, also to reflect the revision of the contributions based on UN scales of contributions, it was agreed to put Draft Resolution 8.1 forward to the plenary, which was then adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/EUROBATS_MoP8.Resolution%208.1%20Financial%20and%20Administrative%20Matters%20%28Budget%202019-2022%29_0.pdf).

16. Draft Resolution 8.2: Amendment of the Annex of the Agreement (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.10.Rev.1)

Mr Tony Hutson (IUCN/SSC, UK) introduced the Draft Resolution and encouraged delegates to read the supporting document provided at Inf.EUROBATS.MoP8.9. The recommended changes bring the Annex of the Agreement into alignment with the most up to date and agreed zoological nomenclature. Germany made a comment that it had a reservation coming from of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice – Germany would have to put a reservation on this Resolution as long as the changes did not become a part of the national legislation. The Draft Resolution was accepted without change and adopted by the Plenary. Resolution 8.2 is available on EUROBATS website at

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.2%20Amendment%20of%20the%20Annex%20to%20the%20Agreement_0.pdf.

17. Draft Resolution 8.3: Monitoring of Daily and Seasonal Movements of Bats (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.11.Rev.1)

In the absence of the convenor of the Working Group, Dr. Gunars Petersons (Latvia) introduced the Draft Resolution. There was some discussion of the text, and a small amendment was agreed to help clarify one bullet point, before the draft resolution was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at: http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.3%20Monitoring%20of%20Daily%20and%20Seasonal%20Movements%20of%20Bats_0.pdf).

18. Draft Resolution 8.4: Wind Turbines and Bat Populations (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.12.Rev.1)

The Convenor of the Intersessional Working Group, Dr Luisa Rodrigues (Portugal) introduced the Draft Resolution. After some constructive discussion, a few useful amendments were made to the Draft Resolution which was then adopted (available on EUROBATS website at: http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.4.%20Wind%20Turbines%20and%20Bat%20Populations_0.pdf).

At this point the Chair of the SWG mentioned that there had been extensive discussion as to how the procedure for the production of guideline updates could be formalised. The Chairs of the two Working Groups as well as the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the MoP and the Executive Secretary had a meeting to agree on the way forward. It was decided to update the terms of reference for the Advisory Committee and the Standing Committee for the next MoP session to give the Standing Committee the remit to endorse guideline updates when required. It was also agreed that in Draft Resolutions it should be mentioned that the guideline updates would be circulated to the Parties through a written procedure. The written procedure would involve the final versions of the guidelines being circulated to all Party representatives, both scientific and administrative focal points, who would then be given a deadline of three months to comment on the draft. These comments would be compiled and forwarded to the IWG that would then finalise

the document. The IWG could either decide to pass it to the MoP to endorse the guidelines, or, if they wished and the Standing Committee meeting would take place sooner, they could pass it to the Standing Committee for endorsement. Belgium suggested that if the IWG made substantial changes to the final draft of the guidelines then it could not be endorsed by the Standing Committee, but it had to be passed to the Parties again. It was agreed that this had to be decided on a case to case basis. It was also agreed that the similar procedure could be applied in case of new guidance documents as well and that in Draft Resolutions a reference to this should be included.

19. Draft Resolution 8.5: Conservation and Management of Important Overground Sites for Bats (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.13.Rev.2)

The Convenor of the Intersessional Working Group, Dr Stéphane Aulagnier (France), presented the Draft Resolution and its Annex. It was noted that the approach taken with the text of the Resolution followed on from a previous Resolution on underground roosts which was adopted at MoP7. It was also discussed, with regard to bullet point 7 which related to administrative matters, that a clarification from the Secretariat was necessary, whether the Secretariat could manage such a task.

The Executive Secretary explained that it occasionally received complaints from NGOs, or individual persons, where they believed that Resolutions or the Agreement itself were violated. The normal procedure was to then contact the focal points of the country in question, both scientific and administrative, to ask for their view on the issue. Very often already at this stage the problem could be solved. However, there had been particularly difficult cases where this did not help. Such complaints would then be referred to either the Bern Convention or the EU commission as EUROBATS had no possibility to put more pressure. In conclusion, the Executive Secretary stated that the Secretariat could cope with such requests as it did not receive too many of them. Norway suggested that point 7 should not be included in the Resolution. If there was a breach, it had to be reported, and this could be dealt with in a separate Resolution on non-compliance issues, which could be prepared for the next MoP. It was concluded that a new resolution on enforcement of the Agreement should be worked on.

This matter being settled, the Draft Resolution 8.5 was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.5%20Conservation%20and%20Management%20of%20Overground%20Sites_0.pdf).

Germany asked for a 12-year-cycle of submission of information, but did not find the majority for it. It added that there was a discussion on the question how the information available in the European Union could be made use of, due to the fact that some overground roosts but a lot of underground roosts were NATURA2000 sites and that Germany had reporting duties under the Habitat Directive. The Executive Secretary supported the initiative of Germany to have a joint meeting with the EU Commission on these issues to find ways how data could be best exchanged and how use could be made of existing time frames as to have exchange to both sides. Germany would try to facilitate finding a date for such a meeting either in Brussels or in Bonn with the person in charge of these issues.

**20. Draft Resolution 8.6: Bats and Light Pollution
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.14.Rev.1)**

In the absence of the Convenor, Dr Suren Gazaryan (Secretariat) introduced the Draft Resolution. Following some lively debate, amendments were agreed, and the draft resolution was updated. The final revision was presented to the Plenary, which then adopted it (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.6%20Bats%20and%20Light%20Pollution.pdf).

**21. Draft Resolution 8.7: Bats and Climate Change
(Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.15.Rev.1)**

In the absence of the Convenors of the relevant IWG, the Chair of the SWG introduced the Draft Resolution. Extensive and lively debate followed. Following the incorporation of some significant changes an amended text was emailed to the Co-Convenors (Daniela Hamidovic, Croatia, and Hugo Rebelo, Portugal) for comment. Their email response led to further minor revisions before the Draft Resolution was then adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.7%20Bats%20and%20Climate%20Change.pdf).

22. Draft Resolution 8.8: Bat Rescue and Rehabilitation Guidelines (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.16.Rev.1)

One of the Co-Convenors, Dr. Lena Godlevska (Ukraine), introduced the Draft Resolution. Following some minor corrections, including the addition of the word “guidelines” to the title, the Draft Resolution was submitted to the Plenary and was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.8%20Guidelines%20on%20Bat%20Rescue%20and%20Rehabilitation.pdf).

23. Draft Resolution 8.9: Bats, Insulation and Lining Materials (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.17.Rev.2)

In the absence of the Convenor, the Chair of the SWG introduced the Draft Resolution. Following some minor re-wording the Draft Resolution was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.9%20Bats%20Insulation%20and%20Lining%20Materials.pdf).

24. Draft Resolution 8.10: Recommended Experience and Skills of Experts with regard to Quality of Assessments (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.18.Rev.1)

One of the Co-convenors, Dr Danilo Russo (Italy), presented the Draft Resolution and its associated Annex. Following some discussion, minor changes were made to the Draft Resolution and its title, and some edits were agreed for the Annex. The Draft Resolution was then adopted (available on EUROBATS website at:

http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.10%20Required%20Experience%20and%20Skills%20of%20Experts%20with%20regard%20to%20Quality%20of%20Assessments.pdf).

25. Draft Resolution 8.11: Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan (2019 – 2022) (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.19)

The Chair of the SWG introduced this Draft Resolution. He explained that the text had been drafted by an ad hoc working group he had convened and that it would form the basis for the work of the Advisory Committee over the next quadrennium. It was effectively a summary of the work arising from all the other Resolutions and, though prepared before the MoP, it could not be finalised until all other Resolutions

had been accepted. For this reason, the final version of the Draft Resolution 8.11 was in detailed reviewed in the Plenary. After some minor adjustments, the Draft Resolution was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at: http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.11%20Implemenatation%20of%20the%20Conservation%20and%20Management%20Plan.pdf).

26. Draft Resolution 8.12: Purpose-built Man-Made Roosts (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.20.Rev.2)

In the absence of the Convenor, Dr. Abdulaziz Alagaili (Saudi Arabia) introduced the Draft Resolution and its associated Annex. The Annex, he explained, was a review of the information the Intersessional Working Group had compiled and collated on purpose-built man-made roosts and the plan was to make it available through the EUROBATS website. Following some very minor edits, the Draft Resolution was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at: http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.12%20Purpose-built%20Man-made%20Roosts.pdf).

27. Draft Resolution 8.13: Insect Decline as a Threat to Bat Populations in Europe (Doc.EUROBATS.MoP8.21.Rev.1)

Mr. Jacques Pir (Luxembourg) presented this Draft Resolution to the Plenary. He explained that the issue of insect decline was first discussed at AC23 following a proposal by Luxembourg. The Advisory Committee agreed that it was an issue of real importance for EUROBATS and a Resolution had been drafted to take the issue forward. The text of the Draft Resolution was discussed and following some amendments it was adopted (available on EUROBATS website at: http://www.eurobats.org/sites/default/files/documents/pdf/Meeting_of_Parties/MoP8.Resolution%208.13%20Insect%20Decline%20as%20a%20Threat%20to%20Bat%20Populations%20in%20Europe.pdf).

28. Other Draft Resolutions submitted by the working groups

There were no other Draft Resolutions that were submitted by any of the Working Groups.

29. Election of the Members of the Standing Committee (StC)

Germany and the UK were permanent members of the Standing Committee. Germany proposed that, since Belgium was doing such a fantastic job in chairing the Standing Committee, it should continue being a member of the Committee. This proposal was supported by Luxembourg. Ireland nominated Italy and this nomination was supported by France. Monaco nominated France and Belgium seconded this nomination. Georgia nominated Ukraine, the nomination of which was supported by Moldova. Denmark nominated Sweden, and this nomination was supported by Finland. Finally, Croatia nominated Bulgaria. This nomination was seconded by Macedonia and the Czech Republic.

30. Arrangements for the 9th Session of the Meeting of Parties

Offers were invited to host the next session of the Meeting of the Parties. The Executive Secretary explained that there had been some initial discussions on this topic, but that it was too early to mention the names of potential host countries.

31. Any other business

There was no other business.

32. Adoption of the Record of the Meeting

An initial draft was circulated at the end of the meeting for delegates' approval. The Secretariat undertook to prepare a final version as soon as possible after the meeting.

33. Close of Meeting

Ms. Isabelle Rosabrunetto, Director General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, closed the 8th Session of the Meeting of Parties. Though it was not in the EUROABTS traditions to have closing remarks made by the host country, it was important for her to do so as she was not able to welcome the participants personally at the beginning of the meeting. However, she knew the participants were in good hands with her very efficient staff members, Ms. Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo and Ms. Coralie Passeron.

Ms. Isabelle Rosabrunetto further stated that she was very pleased to be among the participants of EUROBATs MoP8 and she wished to acknowledge the work that had been accomplished during the previous 3 days: Looking at the number of resolutions that had been discussed, one can say that it was a fruitful meeting.

Indeed, the resolutions gave a concrete insight of all the challenges the Parties were facing to accommodate both economic development and bats conservation, and it was not an easy task.

Ms Rosabrunetto wanted to particularly commend all the Parties for having come to a compromise on the financial and administrative matters for the next quadrennium, considering that budget was often a sensitive matter. From an outsider perspective, the adoption of this resolution demonstrated the spirit of strong cooperation and good will of all the participants at MoP8.

Ms Rosabrunetto concluded by thanking the Secretariat, and in particular, the Executive Secretary, for their efforts in organising the meeting.

Ms. Céline Van Klaveren-Impagliazzo also thanked everybody for their cooperation and kindness.

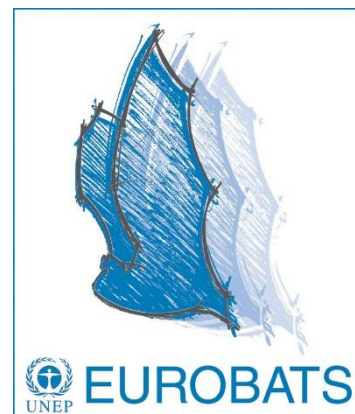
Finally, Mr, Streit expressed his sincere thanks to the hosts for their extraordinary hospitality as well as all the meeting participants for their hard work.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 18:24.

8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties

Monte Carlo, Monaco, 8 – 10 October 2018

List of Participants



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