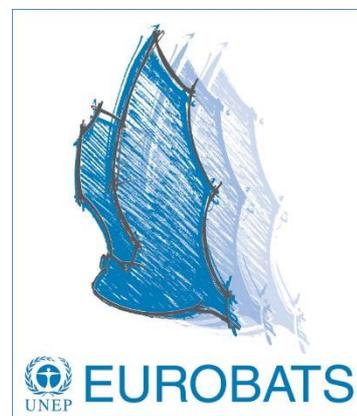


## 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee

Videoconference, July 2020

### Secretariat Report



#### **Staff**

As of 1 April 2020, the staff member Kate Horn (Secretary) has left the Secretariat and has taken up a new position. It is not intended to fill this vacancy in the foreseeable future. The tasks have been redistributed between the two Administrative Assistants while more administrative responsibilities related to EPI projects and publications were assigned to the Scientific Officer. After consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Standing Committee, the post occupancy of the Scientific Officer has been increased to 80% as of 1 April 2020.

#### **Agreement Membership**

Since the 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee there were no accessions to the Agreement. Bosnia and Herzegovina still has to submit a revised instrument of accession. This is expected to happen in the near future.

#### **Outreach**

The various volumes of the EUROBATS Publication Series and Leaflets continue to be in high demand.

In 2019 the “Guidelines for consideration of bats in lighting projects” were translated into German and the issue was printed (2,000 copies). As the demand for the English version of that issue was very high it was reprinted (500 copies) on that occasion.

4,642 publications (including leaflets and publications) were shipped by the Secretariat from the beginning of April 2019 until mid-June 2020.

The International Bat Night continues to be extremely successful. Reports of events are available on the EUROBATS website. In 2019 a total of 1,689 Bat Night Posters were sent out to organisers to help them promote their events.

## **Special Projects**

From 8 applications submitted to the Secretariat in 2018, the following projects were selected and funded within the framework of the EUROBATS Projects Initiative (EPI) during 2019:

- Exploring and mitigating the threat of Lloviu virus re-emergence in Central European *Miniopterus schreibersii* populations / Hungary, Austria, Slovakia, Romania, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Bats and vaults: search and inventory of underground bat shelters in Belarus (in collaboration with Ukrainian partners).

In 2019, 6 applications had been received by the Secretariat and assessed by the EPI evaluation group. In 2020, the available funding is enough to fund at least the following project with the best rating:

- Survey and monitoring of bats in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Implementation of other projects depends on the availability of funds and voluntary contributions of the Parties.

## **Working Arrangements for the Secretariat during the SarsCoV2 pandemic**

Since the beginning of March 2020, the Bonn based UN Secretariats were requested to switch to home office with the exception of only very few critical staff to continue working on the UN Campus. In addition, all travel and physical meetings/conferences were suspended.

As of 17 June 2020, the Bonn based UNEP offices were authorized to gradually return to office work while at no time more than 40% of all UN staff shall be present on the UN Campus. Travel and physical meetings/conferences remain suspended for undetermined time.

## **Special Activities for the Secretariat related to SarsCoV2**

Particularly in the months of March and April 2020 the Secretariat has very closely cooperated with the CMS Secretariat in addressing misleading media reports globally which suggested bats to have been the cause of the virus outbreak. In addition statements to governments were jointly prepared and published.

A EUROBATS led ad hoc working group has developed and published guidelines for field workers to prevent infections with SarsCoV2 from humans to bats.