

EBCC

European Bird Census Council



every bird counts

The European Bird Census Council (EBCC) is an association of like-minded expert ornithologists co-operating in various ways to improve bird monitoring and atlas work in Europe, and thereby inform and improve the management and conservation of bird populations. It aims to promote exchange of news, ideas and expertise through a journal and a programme of workshops and conferences. It works closely with ornithological and conservation organisations, and encourages links between ornithologists, land managers and policy makers. The EBCC oversees specialist working groups and European monitoring projects; these have included in the past the atlas of European breeding birds, and currently the pan-European common bird monitoring scheme.

Chairman's report April 2007 to March 2010

1. Overview

The last three years has seen the steady development of the work of the EBCC and a number of interesting new initiatives and research outputs. Much of the time of the Board and Observers has been tied up with core activities; the EBCC website, maintaining a Delegates list, publishing *Bird Census News*, taking forward conference proceedings, helping to organise the next conference, dealing with data requests, overseeing EBCC initiatives, etc. One major milestone in this period has been the registration of EBCC as an Association under Dutch Law. This long-awaited move formalises our legal status and allows EBCC to move forwards as the Association and its Delegates see fit. Proceedings from the last two EBCC conferences have been finalised; those from Kayseri were published in 2008, those from Chiavenna will be printed in April 2010. The Board has also finalised a co-authorship policy, has plans for raising the EBCC's profile, has discussed strategic direction, the succession of Board members, EBCC awards, 3- and 6-year work plans, our policy for collaboration, repeating the European breeding bird atlas, and so forth. We have initiated the publication of an EBCC Newsletter, aimed primarily at delegates, and re-branded *Bird Census News* as the Journal of the EBCC. A forthcoming article in *Bird Census News* will trace the evolution of the EBCC from the International Bird Census Committee in the 1960s and the European Ornithological Atlas Committee in the 1970s to the formation of EBCC in 1992.

The financial position of the EBCC remains relatively secure, but there is an issue for us as the revenue we have enjoyed from sales of Atlas data gradually diminishes. Many of these data are now more than thirty years old! The EBCC needs to look to new ways of raising revenue and that is an issue for the new Board. EBCC funds are used routinely to support travel costs for Board members and observers who do not have access to such funds, to support website maintenance, to support EBCC conferences (especially travel costs for participants from low income countries) and legal fees.

The PECBMS remains the EBCC's flagship project and is now publishing its wild bird indicators on a regular basis and working smoothly with fantastic support from our European network. We have recently confirmed EU funding for the PECBMS that takes the project through to June 2012, so that allows continuity for the project to operate effectively. The EU-funded SCALES project is another example of how EBCC capacity has been greatly increased. The PECBMS has now received three direct grants from the EU (DG Environment) and the SCALES project is the first framework programme to involve EBCC formally as a partner. All of this is unprecedented. It has been particularly pleasing to see the publication of the first edition of 'A best practice guide for wild bird monitoring schemes', which has been a long-held ambition for the EBCC and has finally come to fruition thanks to a great collective effort. So far, 171 copies have been sold and 350 distributed.

An area of work that has grown recently and is closely linked to the EBCC, is the global Wild Bird Index project (<http://www.twentyten.net/wbi>), which is an initiative of RSPB and BirdLife International and forms part of the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (2010 BIP: <http://www.twentyten.net>). The 2010 BIP is a global initiative to track progress towards achieving the target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. A paper assessing the target across a suite of biodiversity indicators is currently in revision for publication in *Science*.

Arguably, EBCC's reputation and standing has risen in the last decade driven most through the creation of the PECBMS and the adoption of wild bird indicators in Europe. Wild bird indicators have been adopted by the EU as indicators of sustainable development and in environmental reporting, and have now been adopted by nearly 20 European countries in related national processes. Core EU and RSPB funding has allowed the PECBMS to operate with two staff members and become established with the support of many individuals and organisations across Europe. The positive influence and input from BirdLife International should not be under-estimated here as they are a leading voice in Europe and have considerable political influence.

A second significant advance, which is partly linked to PECBMS, is the growth in the scientific output of papers where authors carry EBCC affiliation (see 16). Academic recognition of our work is highly important for recognition by policy and decision makers, and for our wider scientific reputation too. A further part of this success is our growing relationships with key agencies in Europe, DG Environment, EuroStat, EEA and European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity, and developing working relationships with leading academics too. Operationally, clarification of the legal standing of the EBCC has been an extremely big step forwards providing the foundation for future development and growth. Data from the European breeding birds atlas has made a significant contribution to research in the field of climate change, some of which has involved the EBCC. The publication of the first ever climatic atlas of its kind for any taxa (Huntley B., Green R.E., Collingham Y.C., Willis S.G., 2007, A climatic atlas of European breeding birds. Barcelona: Lynx Edicions) was a landmark publication and involved the EBCC and used breeding atlas data. Further copycat publications for other taxa have followed and there has been an explosion in climatic research, especially in modelling and predicting range change of species under climatic change. The establishment of formal working projects, such as PECBMS and SMOG, which report to Board, has proven very effective in promoting our work and allowing it to grow. The focussed and concerted development of the PECBMS illustrates the strengths of a targeted approach. Another key for PECBMS, which should not be underestimated, is the direct link to policy users, decision makers and policy instruments. We need to ensure that our work and outputs have policy relevance in line with our stated aims. However, our single-minded promotion of the PECBMS and wild bird indicators has inevitably meant that other areas of interest to EBCC (like atlasing, demography, migration) have arguably been somewhat neglected, or at least, not strongly promoted in the last few years. In the next few years, that balance may be redressed, depending on the aspirations and priorities of the new Board and the Delegates,

Looking forwards, new Board that is formed in Cáceres this March will need to consider its priorities. It might wish to raise the profile of EBCC, raise awareness of the need for greater funding opportunities at national and international levels for bird monitoring and research, pursue funding opportunities for high priority work, and promote partnerships with like-minded organisations, NGOs, universities, government agencies to further the Associations' aims. Being more specific, a new Board might wish to continue to promote common bird monitoring and the use of wild bird indicators at national and EU/European levels (via the PECBMS). It might wish to continue to promote ongoing work on spatial modelling and birds (via the SMOG & SCALES). It might wish to promote a second breeding atlas for European birds (via a new atlas working group?) – an idea to be discussed in Cáceres with Delegates. It might wish to promote further work on climate change and birds (via a climate change working group?) – again an idea to be discussed in Cáceres with Delegates. Arguably one of the higher priorities for the EBCC would be to revamp and re-launch its website. While many parts of the website are current and contain excellent content, other parts look out of date and would benefit from a major update. Again, it will be for the new Board to take EBCC forwards as it sees fit.

It is probably unfair to pick highlights in the past three years, but I will do so anyway. The growth of the PECBMS is a considerable highlight as is the way work on spatial modelling has developed through involvement in the EU-funded SCALES project. The latter now gives us real capacity to take this work forwards. The publication of the first climatic atlas of European breeding birds represented a significant scientific advance, although EBCC's direct involvement in the work was small. The publication of an EBCC best practice guide for bird monitoring is another milestone characterised by a great collective effort by our network. The SEED Bird Indicators project was an excellent initiative providing much needed support in Eastern Europe, which remains a very high priority for EBCC. Those involved in the delivery of this project are to be congratulated on what they have achieved and we must ensure that this momentum is not lost. Importantly, the EBCC has made a very significant contribution to climate change research. While more mundane, the registration of EBCC as an Association under Dutch Law is extremely important. Lastly, as Chairman it is very gratifying and highly encouraging to see the publication of a wide range of papers carrying EBCC co-authors and emanating from EBCC projects and collaborations. We have papers published in some of the most highly rated ecological and ornithological journals and such publications are of tremendous value in building the scientific reputation and credibility of the EBCC, and thereby facilitating and promoting our work at national and international levels.

Finally, as Chairman of EBCC I would like to thank all of the Board members and observers for the support they have given me in the last three years, and the very hard work they have put into the work of the Association.

2. Membership of the Board

Richard Gregory (Chairman, UK)
Ruud Foppen (Vice-Chairman & Treasurer, The Netherlands)
Hans-Günther Bauer (Secretary, Germany)
Anny Anselin (Editor *Bird Census News*, Belgium)
Åke Lindström (Delegate Officer, Sweden)
Frederic Jiguet (France)
Lluís Brotons (Spain)
Svetoslav Spasov (Bulgaria)
Alexander Mischenko (Russia)

The Board has also called upon the expertise of the following observers:

Ian Burfield (observer for BirdLife International)
David Noble (observer for the British Trust for Ornithology)
Petr Voříšek & Jana Škorpilová (observers Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme)
Lorenzo Fornasari (2007 Conference Organising Committee)
Sylvia Barova (coordinator of the SEED Bird Indicators project)
Juan Carlos del Moral & Virginia Escandell (2010 Conference Organising Committee)

3. Meetings of ExCo

Board has met twice a year since the last Annual General Meeting in Chiavenna Italy in 2007, with its 33rd to 39th meetings held in: Chiavenna April 2007, Thetford October 2007, Sofia April 2008, Paris October 2008, Cáceres April 2009, Lund October 2009 and Cáceres March 2010. The Minutes and Agendas from Board meetings are posted routinely on the EBCC website allowing Delegates and others to learn more about our work (see: <http://www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=11>)

4. Financial position

The financial position of the EBCC remains relatively healthy during the period under consideration. A full financial report will be presented at the General Meeting of the Association by the Treasurer and incorporated in the minutes of the meeting. In short, the financial position of the EBCC was very good in 2007

and 2008 with a balance of around 10 thousands €, thanks largely to the sale of breeding atlas data and the support from Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) to support the publication of *Bird Census News*. Costs mostly stemmed from travel costs associated with Board meetings. However, legal costs associated with registering EBCC as an association were considerable and higher than anticipated. These costs however are a one-off. A net loss in 2009 reflects this expenditure but also, and unusually, a lack of revenue from data sales. The total balance of money in 2009 remained acceptable at above 7 thousands €. Falling atlas data sales and a lack of other current funding sources is an issue for the Board to address.

5. Conference proceedings

Conference proceedings from the 16th EBCC conference in Kayseri, Turkey in September 2004 were published as a special edition of the *Catalan Journal of Ornithology* in November 2008. Special thank to Lluís Brotons, Sergi Herrando and Uygur Özesmi for their assistance in finalising the proceedings. Conference proceedings from the 17th EBCC conference in Chiavenna, Italy in 2007 will be published in April 2010 in *Avocetta*, and several papers have already been published in *Bird Census News*. We thank Lorenzo Fornasari for driving this process forwards.

6. Bird Census News

Since the last conference, six issues of *Bird Census News* have been published:

BCN 2007 volume 20/1: 48 pgs

BCN 2007 volume 20/2: 40 pgs

BCN 2008 volume 21/1: 36 pgs

BCN 2008 volume 21/2: 36 pgs

BCN 2009 volume 22/1: 40 pgs

BCN 2009 volume 22/2: 40 pgs

Total pages: 240

Bird Census News has a circulation of 300. Since 2003, all issues have been available via the EBCC website in PDF format. Since 2008, *Bird Census News* has been branded as a Journal instead of a Newsletter, since we hope this will raise its profile and because EBCC now has a separate Newsletter for Delegates. The EBCC Board is extremely grateful to the Research Institute for Nature and Forest (INBO) in Belgium for continuing to provide financial support for the publication of *Bird Census News*.

7. Provision of data from the EBCC Atlas of European Breeding Birds

At each of its meetings, Board considers requests for atlas data for academic and/or conservation purposes. Recent requests include those from: Szabolcs Nagy, on behalf of the BioScore Project; Pedram Rowhani University of Hawaii, supervised by Nicolas Titeux; Sven Trautmann, Johannes-Gutenberg University; Peter B. Permann, Federal Research Institute WSL, Switzerland; Raino Virkkalo, Finnish Environment Institute; Ramona Maggini Lehmann & Niklaus Zbinden, Swiss Ornithological Institute; Alica Tschierschke, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research; Barbara Anderson University of York; Sylvain Antoniazza, University of Lausanne; and Janine Sybertz, Leibniz University, Hannover. Board seeks to assist such requests and make data available for use following EBCC's guidelines for the provision and supply of atlas data. In some cases, EBCC would charge for data provision and supply but in others, it might suggest some kind of collaboration. The Board assesses each request on its individual merits.

8. EBCC on the web

EBCC's website www.ebcc.info has been updated on regular basis. The site is maintained by CSO (Czech Ornithological Society, BirdLife Partner in Czech Republic) under a contract from the EBCC. Board members and observers contribute to the site and it is discussed at each Board meeting. We are especially grateful to David Noble from the BTO who has acted as our Web Champion and Petr Vorisek and Jana Škorpilova who have helped to maintain and update content. The most active area continues to be that related to the Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS), where news, information and outputs are regularly

updated. Alongside this, there have been regular updates of Board agendas and minutes, *Bird Census News*, the Delegates List and Newsletter, Country Reports etc.

9. The legal status of EBCC

Following earlier discussions, the Board has taken forward a proposal to register as an Association in The Netherlands to formalise the legal status of EBCC. As of 17th March 2008, the EBCC is officially registered as an Association under Dutch Law. The Articles of Association can be found on the EBCC website (see: <http://www.ebcc.info/what.html>). Practically, moving to this status has had little impact upon the way the EBCC and Board has operated or is able to operate, although there have been a number of small procedural changes and extra responsibilities placed on the Board. These changes have tightened the governance of the EBCC to some degree and the Board views such changes as a positive step for the Association and its Delegates. A short paper explaining how these changes might affect EBCC Delegates will be published on the website shortly.

10. Planning for the 18th International EBCC conference in Cáceres, Spain, March 2010.

Juan Carlos del Moral and Virginia Escandell (on behalf of the conference organising committee) have joined Board meetings several times since Chiavenna to discuss the preparation and organisation of the Spanish conference. In April 2006, the Board visited Cáceres to see the proposed venue and facilities, and discuss details of organisation. Board members and observers have formed part of the scientific committee and assisted in shaping the programme. The organisation of international conferences of the EBCC remains a very high priority for the Board.

11. Support for establishing new common bird monitoring schemes in Europe

EBCC's Board and observers have provided support and advice in various ways to assist pilot or new common bird monitoring initiatives. These include those in Slovakia, Belarus, Turkey, Lithuania, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Greece, Cyprus and Portugal. In recent years, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has provided financial support to common bird monitoring schemes in Bulgaria and Romania.

12. Liaison with Delegates and Newsletter

The establishment of a Delegate Officer in the form of Åke Lindström has allowed the EBCC to maintain and update an impressive list of Delegates. EBCC considers 46 countries where currently we have 82 confirmed national Delegates. We have two confirmed Delegates in 39 countries, one confirmed Delegate in four countries, and three countries without confirmed Delegates. Starting in 2008, we have produced two Newsletters per year that are distributed to the EBCC delegates and are published on the website. The Newsletters contain information and news about the work of the EBCC that is pulled together by Åke around each Board meeting. Delegates are warmly invited to contribute to the Newsletter and tell us about themselves and their news. Please contact Åke with your ideas and suggestions, or talk to him and other Board members and observers in Cáceres.

13. Pan-European monitoring - The Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme: report Petr Vorisek & Jana Škorpilová

The Pan-European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme (PECBMS) is a joint initiative of the EBCC and BirdLife International that has started in January 2002. During its existence, the PECBMS has established a large European network of collaborators – coordinators of national or regional monitoring schemes, EBCC delegates and/or BirdLife partners. The PECBMS is officially led by a project manager, Richard Gregory (based in the RSPB, UK), and coordinated by a central coordination unit (based in the CSO, Czech Republic) that consists of a project coordinator, Petr Voříšek, and technical assistants, Alena Klvaňová (October 2006-May 2008, currently on maternal leave), and Jana Škorpilová (since May 2008). The project Steering Group and Technical Advisory Group both meet annually and oversee the work.

Activities implemented, main results & achievements over the period May 2007 – March 2010

PECBMS outputs – European and regional common bird indices and indicators

Since the PECBMS commencement, the European indices and indicators have been already updated five times. The 2008 update contained indices for 135 species and set of headline indicators for period until 2006 based on data from 21 countries. The 2009 update contained indices for 136 species and set of headline indicators for period until 2007 based on data from 22 countries.

New countries in PECBMS

New schemes in Portugal and Bulgaria have contributed data since the 2008 update and Slovakia has provided their data since the 2009 update. Other countries like Romania, Greece, Slovenia, Macedonia or Lithuania plan to contribute trend data in the near future and [other Member States](#) such as [Luxembourg](#), [Cyprus and Malta](#) remain priorities.

Species classification

Currently, we use the species habitat classification for bird indicators developed in 2005 and it is based on a species classification within bio-geographical regions (Atlantic, Boreal, Continental and Mediterranean).

Data quality checks

Development of various data quality checks is a continuing process that has undergone many improvements in control of both national data and European and regional indices before they are included in the indicators. New software tools have been developed as well, including BirdSTATs that enables you to run TRIM in a more convenient batch mode and Combine Tool that resolves the problem with data combination of several schemes within a country.

Project outputs publications and dissemination

Indices and indicators published:

- On the EBCC website (<http://www.ebcc.info>) in 2008 and 2009
- In the brochure 'State of Europe's Common Birds' - two latest in 2007 and 2009
- In a series of scientific publications - see 16.

Selected talks and other presentations at meetings and conferences:

- Annual meeting of the European Forest Task Force, BirdLife International in Poland (2007)
- Meeting of the Standing Forestry Committee, DG Agri in Belgium (2008)
- BirdLife's World Conservation Conference in Argentina (2008)
- EOU conferences in Austria (2007) and Switzerland (2009)
- EBCC conference in Italy (2007) and Spain (2010)
- BOU conference in United Kingdom (2009)
- ECCB conference in Czech Republic (2009)

Use of PECBMS outputs in policy documents and materials

The PECBMS outputs are used as official biodiversity indicators in Europe: the Farmland Bird Index has been adopted by the EU as a Structural Indicator, a Sustainable Development Indicator, and an indicator of the effectiveness of agri-environment measures under the Rural Development Regulation. The PECBMS wild bird indicators have also been incorporated in the set of indicators to assess progress towards the European target of halting biodiversity loss by 2010 (SEBI indicators).

Project communication

- Information on national monitoring schemes updated on the website annually since 2008
- Press releases on the occasion of launch of the indices and indicators, or other relevant topics (climate change indicator)
- National Farmland bird indicator for EU Indicators of Sustainable Development and Structural Indicators annually delivered to Eurostat

- Regular reports on the EBCC website (twice per year)
- Regular reporting to EBCC Board (twice per year)
- PECBMS workshop in January 2009 (Prague, Czech Republic)
- Coordination with other initiatives, e.g. EBCC Spatial Modelling Group, Global Wild Bird Indicator project or activities of BirdLife International

Support of national monitoring schemes

PECBMS does not provide direct financial support to schemes but attempts to assist in technical issues like monitoring design, computation methods and data management or help in lobbying for funding. All this includes either personal visits to coordinators (recently to Slovakia, Estonia, Lithuania) or meetings with policy people at national level. For this purpose, publication 'A Best Practice Guide for Wild Bird Monitoring Schemes' summarising the practical advice on how to establish and run the monitoring schemes was released in 2008.

Funding

Since its inception in 2002, the scheme has been continuously supported by the RSPB. It has also been supported financially by the European Commission since 2006; currently has received third EC grant from July 2009 until June 2012.

Challenges for near future

We aim to publish PECBMS outputs on a regular annual basis, to improve geographical coverage by establishing new monitoring schemes in countries with no scheme, to increase the number of species by incorporating data on rare species (e.g. from species-specific surveys), and to explore the possibility of producing indicators for other habitats (e.g. inland wetlands, or urban). Another task for future project development is to increase the scientific research to reveal the underlying trend patterns of individual species and groups of species in more details.

14. Spatial Modelling Workgroup (SMOG) and SCALES project update Lluís Brotons & Henk Sierdsema

The work of the Spatial Modelling Workgroup (SMOG) has continued to develop as capacity and opportunities have allowed. Oral presentations have been given at the EOU in Zurich and ECCB meeting in Prague. There has been involvement in a number of studies regarding the effectiveness of high natural value farming areas in France and Europe. Several papers from members of the workgroup on various types of (spatial) modelling of (breeding) bird data have been published. A draft of a review paper on the technical aspects of monitoring data integration for mapping purposes has been prepared. The different members of the SMOG Group are now commenting on the draft. A second document will be produced in 2010, which will identify priorities for future spatial modelling work within SMOG. In addition to the activities derived from the SCALES project (discussed below), the group will favour their involvement in EBCC specific targets, such as the proposed new European atlas or the development of specific products within PECBMS. Spatial modelling raises both difficult technical questions and difficult practical questions about data access that need to be overcome for the work to develop. Both of these aspects in part explain modest progress by the working group, although this is now set to change. In 2010, SMOG will finalize a first version set of R-scripts for spatial modelling of count data ("TRIMmaps": see below).

One of the main goals of SMOG is to facilitate the production of distribution and trend maps from bird monitoring data. This can be both on a regional/national levels as well as on a Pan-European level. For a pilot project on farmland birds, we requested raw count data sets that were combined to make supra-national maps. Research on this data set is still performed to solve issues like the differences between data types. Next to this supra-national pooling of individual data sets we foresee the opportunity to combine maps, much like is currently done for the PECBMS, where indices are combined instead of raw data. This would make it possible to optimally use national knowledge and national environmental data sets. A prerequisite however, would be that all scheme coordinators would be able to make maps from their count data. In order to

facilitate and standardize this process we are currently working on a set of R-scripts (open-source statistical software) that have the possibility to use standard input- or output-files of TRIM (.dat or .F1-files), in combination with a file with coordinates of the sampling sites, to make maps. A first draft of this programme, tentatively called 'TRIMmaps' will become available this spring and will be demonstrated in Cáceres.

Since the use of these scripts are not a 'drag and click'-fashion some training will be necessary for most users. We therefore intend to organise a course to familiarise coordinators and/or other supporting staff with these scripts and gis-software to produce maps ready for publication.

The most exciting development for SMOG however has been formal involvement of EBCC in an EU-funded FP7 framework project called SCALES (scaling spatial biodiversity issues on European scale). The EBCC is a partner in the project and has funding from SCALES and the Centre Tecnològic Forestal de Catalunya (CTFC) for a two-year post-doc position based in Solsona and supervised by Lluís Brotons. The EBCC-CTFC post-doc is Francesc Sardà and he joined the team in March 2010. He will be working on spatial modelling issues of bird monitoring data during the next two years, with most of the time spent on the SCALES project, representing EBCC issues. Francesc will be working very closely with the SMOG working group to take our ideas on spatial modelling forwards.

Work on the SCALES project has already started. So far, the main duty of the EBCC groups has been related to the development of a bird trait database to be use in different work packages. EBCC is responsible for the information on bird-habitat relationships. A first contribution has been through the Bird-EUNIS categories association developed some time ago by SOVON in the name of EBCC for the European Topic Centre on Biological Diversity (ETC-BD) in Paris. With the permission of ETC-BD, this data set will be used within the SCALES project. The European Breeding Bird Atlas has been also supplied to David Storch's group in Prague and some analyses will be conducted in due time regarding the scaling of species distribution. Spatial modelling objectives within the project for which EBCC is responsible will be discussed in Cáceres together with the other members of the EBCC-CTFC team involved in the project.

15. SEED Bird Indicators: Support Eastern Europeans to Develop Bird Indicators: report from Sylvia Barova

The SEED Bird Indicators project ended following 2 years of capacity building involving BirdLife Partners in Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Poland, Lithuania and the Macedonian Ecological Society. A full report was published in *Bird Census News*, (2009: 22/2, 69-75). An objective of the project was to have successful national Common Bird Monitoring (CBM) Schemes in these seven countries based on a citizen science approach. Skilled volunteers collect data to be analyzed by scientists, who look for the short and long-term population trends of widespread birds. From this they develop indices for the quality of the environment. Such an index, used in EU policies, is the Farmland Bird Index, which is one of the ways to measure the progress towards the 2010 goal to halt the loss of biodiversity.

New national CBM schemes were launched in Macedonia, Turkey and Belarus. Lithuania re-launched its scheme, while Poland, Romania and Bulgaria improved them and strengthened the links with policy and conservation. Communication and coordination with other projects, programmes, sector agencies and organisations were enhanced and dialogues with governments about the use of bird indicators in policy formulation was initiated or improved.

The SEED BI project was coordinated by BSPB and funded by the GEF Small Grants Programme, RSPB and the Black Vulture Conservation Foundation. The project was implemented in close cooperation with the PECBMS, a joint initiative of European Bird Census Council and BirdLife International, who provided expertise and invaluable support. At the end of January 2009, European CBM coordinators and key experts in bio-indicators, met for their regular symposium in Prague. Among the main discussion topics were the value and versatility of bird indicators, which can be developed for different habitats. Future challenges and improvements of the national CBM schemes and the lessons from the SEED BI project were also discussed

and a twinning approach for capacity development was established. Various avenues to extend the funding of this exciting new project were discussed and explored but unfortunately, few seemed suitable and we were not able to pursue them. Elements of the work initiated by this project have now been incorporated into the routine work of the PECBMS. In this way, we hope that the momentum and interest created by the SEED BI project will not be lost.

16. Some publications involving EBCC co-authors

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- Jiguet F, Julliard R, Thomas CD, Dehorter O, Newson SE & Couvet D (2006) Thermal range predicts bird resilience to extreme temperatures. *Ecology Letters* 9,1321-1330.
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