

36th Board Meeting of EBCC in Paris, France: 14-15 October 2008

Present: Richard Gregory (RG, chair), Anny Anselin (AA, BCN Editor), Ruud Foppen (RF, Vice President, Treasurer), Åke Lindström (ÅL, Delegate's Officer), Hans-Günther Bauer (GB, Secretary), Juan Carlos del Moral (JCM, Conference Organization 2010), Svetoslav Spasov (SS), Sylvia Barova (SB, Observer SEED BI), Frédéric Jiguet (FJ, Data Officer), Jana Škorpilova (JŠ, PECBMS), Ian Burfield (IB, Observer BirdLife International), David Noble (DN, Observer BTO), Lluís Brotons (LB), Alexander Mischenko (AM).

Apologies: Petr Vorisek (PV), Lorenzo Fornasari (LF).

TOP 1: Chairman's welcome to the Paris meeting.

Chairman welcomes all members and guests, particularly Jana Škorpilova as representative of PECBMS. Special thanks go to FJ for hosting and arranging the meeting. This is an EBCC Board Meeting (instead of an Annual General Meeting).

TOP 2: Minutes of 35th Board meeting, checking back on Action points

CSO maintenance of EBCC website: action done, paperwork finished regarding Lukas Viktora, but bills are not settled yet. EBCC is not eligible to pay V.A.T. from advice received by RF.

Actions: Delegates are not yet informed properly about changes in "EBCC constitution", so far only short note in Newsletter exists; pdf version of Articles of Association and some explanatory text to be made available to Delegates on website. RF to send pdf around. Lukas Viktora will have to send bill to RF in order to settle finances. RG to work on updating the website with assistance of DN & PV.

Minutes agreed upon unanimously. Minutes will be stored with the EBCC Secretary (GB).

TOP 3: Proceedings of the 16th and 17th International Conferences

Kayseri Proceedings now to be published in Catalan Journal of Ornithology instead of Turkish Journal of Zoology. Now 10 papers are finalized and after the English has been checked (to be done by DN, IB and RG/RSPB) page lay outs will be completed; this could be finished this year. Two more papers were deleted from the list (one as out of date, one uncertain).

Huge thanks to LB for stepping in as editor and for his excellent work on these Proceedings.

Actions: RG to send e-mail to all authors in order to ask them for permission to change the publishing organ (possible that some authors will withdraw and resubmit paper to other journal) [Done: 3 Nov]. RG, LB (and Uygur Özsesmi, UÖ) to write EBCC introduction for Catalan Journal of Ornithology issue.

Distribution of Proceedings to all Kayseri participants and ensuing costs for EBCC are still to be settled. Proceedings will be made available on web (free access rather than sending it to everyone by mail, but asking participants if they would rather want a hard copy). Some copies could be distributed at the next PECBMS workshop in Prague (Jan 2009), where many will attend anyway.

List of participants needed from UÖ in order to be able to contact people. RG to also ask UÖ for any conference fee money put aside for distribution of Proceedings.

Proceedings of Chiavenna Conference

LF not present, but he thankfully sent an overview of current state of affairs to Board.

Altogether 41 papers received, of which 39 reviewed; of the reviewed papers 2 were rejected, a further 6 selected for BCN; in total 31 accepted for Avocetta (with 2 more possible, see above). Of the 31 accepted papers revisions by authors are still lacking in 13 cases. The plan is for all papers to be assessed by the end of the year and to publish the Proceedings by end of February 2009.

Action: LF to proceed with and finalize Proceedings publication.

TOP 4: Plans for 18th International EBCC Conference in Spain

JCM gives overview of current plans of Cáceres Conference. A discussion on the main conference title ensues, which is agreed to be "Bird Numbers 2010: monitoring, indicators and targets".

JCM to send SEO weblink to Board members within next 4 weeks in order to improve information exchange on current conference plan.

Fixed are: date of Conference from 23rd to 29th March 2010 (with Board meeting and arrival day on 22nd March), location, accommodation, on-site facilities, excursions etc.

Suggestions for plenaries:

Headings: Bird monitoring; understanding; impacts

- Monitoring of rare and endangered species
- Bird Monitoring: atlases and censuses
- Citizen science
- New methods in bird monitoring
- Birds as indicators
- Introduced/alien and invasive species
- Climate and land use change
- Migration
- 2010 targets and beyond
- Monitoring influencing policy

Conference plan: Arrival on Mon, plenaries/talks on Tue, Wed, and Fri, excursion on Thu, and optional final session on Sat morning, if people wish to organise their own meetings. General Meeting on Wed afternoon.

Suggestions for guest speakers:

1. DG Agri: Farmland Bird Indicator [IB asked BirdLife colleagues, who suggested Martin Scheele - Head of DG Agri's Environment Unit]
2. JCM will send proposals for Spanish speaker (subject open; raptor or bustard conservation?)
3. Ian Newton: migration ecology or Leon Bennun: African-Eurasian Migration
4. Chris Thomas: climate change and biodiversity; alternatively Y. Sokolov
5. Juliet Vickery: farmland policy [in 2009, she will leave BTO to become Head of International Research at RSPB, so could potentially talk on other topics too?]
6. N.N. (Jeremy Greenwood): citizen science
7. N.N. from USA: Bird monitoring
8. N.N. from NZ, AUS or ?: introduced/invasive species
9. Jacqueline McGlade: Monitoring influencing policy
10. Georgina Mace: indicators; 2010 target

Budget costs not yet specifiable, by December these will be known, and provisional conference fees can be calculated at next meeting.

Action: JCM to provide details for conference web site - send it to PV, DN, and RG - and to prepare list of conference costs accruing.

TOP 5: Association under Dutch Law “rules and regulations”; distribution of Articles

RF gives Treasurer report. Delegates have to be informed about Articles of Association; also, pdf of Articles will be sent out to Board members. RF hands over official signed document of the Articles to RG.

Short description of essentials (daily management issues and general procedures of EBCC) to be prepared for Board and Delegates.

End of financial year is 31 December. Proper financial report to be prepared by RF after that date, and presented at Board Meeting in Cáceres in spring 2009; this will be “official” annual meeting with ‘everybody’ invited.

Financial matters have to be checked by independent observers, RF suggests Frank Saris or Ward Hagemeijer, AA suggests Koen Devos as somebody outside SOVON.

V.A.T. number currently not deemed necessary; but will probably be necessary once projects are entered which include larger money transfers, or when large-scale sales accrue (e.g. new atlas).

Actions: RF and RG to go forward in preparing the paper on EBCC essentials (“practical implications”).

Articles of Association to be put on website (DN, PV).

Board to suggest independent persons living close to or in the Netherlands who could independently check and approve EBCC financial transactions.

TOP 6: Financial report

RF gives reports for financial years 2007 and the running year. BCN support by Anny’s institute “virtual”, since no real income.

EBCC atlas royalties by Poyser amounted to 350.- €, increased income probably due to impact of the climatic atlas(?)

Fabian Peter (CH) still has to pay his data request fees (RF to ask for this bill to be settled).

Future income of EBCC mainly through data requests (see top 12).

Action: RF to check for outstanding payments (and data requests).

TOP 7: Bird Census News; ISSN registration

AA reports; Volume 21/1 of BCN not finished yet, but all papers for this issue available; will fill 40 pages. Three articles of Chiavenna proceedings included, together with normal BCN items. Two more Chiavenna articles expected for subsequent issue 21/2. That issue to be produced also within 2008 (because of availability of financial provisions). Several articles promised, including update of SEED project and best practice guide.

The offer from Sergi Herrando to freely use bird pictures from the Catalan Bird Atlas in BCN was gratefully accepted; the colour pictures will be excellent within the down-loadable version.

In order to receive official ISSN registration number, an English version of the official Dutch form was provided by AA for Board members for agreement during the Paris meeting. Board agreed.

Action: IB to check the rights for the EBCC atlas pictures with Poyser [Done: BirdLife sought permission from individual artists in late 1990s, and distributed images electronically to all BirdLife Partners with terms of use in 2000. IB has now sent copy of images and terms to AA]. RG, SB, etc. to provide (promised) articles and notes for BCN issue 21/2. RF to sent filled-in form via internet to the Dutch journal registration office in order to receive ISSN number for BCN.

TOP 8: Delegates' list, status report, newsletter

ÅL prepared a revised delegate list; now fewer Delegates due to loss of the two Andorran Delegates. Now 36 countries with two, 4 with one and 6 without any Delegate. Suggestions for changes in some countries. For Azerbaijan one Delegate possible: Elchin Sultanov. Belgium: Jean-Yves Paquet to take over from Jean-Paul Jacob who stepped down. Board in favour of these changes and nominations accepted pending formal ratification by the General Assembly in spring 2009. Suggestion of new Delegate for Portugal, but currently two Delegates on list. Suggestion also for Georgia and Armenia, but no contacts details provided. Uygur Özesmi stepped down as Delegate; replacement to be found, he suggests Dr. Sancar Baris, who is widely respected and enjoys support across Turkish ornithological community (to be confirmed in writing to ÅL, e.g. from Turkish BirdLife Partner DD). Board provisionally approves his nomination.

According to new Articles of Association changes to Delegates list need to be formalized in future.

Newsletter should be produced in connection with EBCC Board meeting, since almost all information comes from Board members, anyway. ÅL asks everybody to provide short notes on new items within their respective countries. Newsletter is almost completed, and will be sent out for additional comments to Board (with the English corrected afterwards), then finished and distributed.

Actions: ÅL to send out preliminary Newsletter version for additions and comments to Board members soon. IB to send contact details of Georgian and Armenian suggestions to ÅL [done],

TOP 9: Website

DN reports. Not many updates since last meeting; only item PECBMS new trends and updates on procedure. But several items "in store" (see actions).

RG thanks PV, JS and DN for their excellent work on the EBCC website.

Actions: Articles of Association still to be added (RG); DN to provide news on conference proceedings. Country reports still unchanged (who has time?); also need to extend list of papers using EBCC data (RG?); SS offers technical assistance to update website. Further items: New section in Spatial Modelling to be written (LB). Suggestions to add pdfs of State of the Birds of different countries and on meta-analysis of atlas works. DN to collate national reports for inclusion on website. Proceedings of the first IBCC conference of 1969 are now available to be added as well.

TOP 10: Recent data requests

Several new data requests after Koprivshitsa meeting:

- Sven Trautmann, protected areas in Germany with respect to global warming; Board in favour.
- Pedram Rowhani (Univ. Hawaii, supervised by N. Titeux): RG to circulate proposal
- Niklaus Zbinden (CH) requests information from the climate atlas, which EBCC does not “own”; RG to pass this on to the people responsible
- Nicolas Titeux et al.: data have been supplied
- Peter B. Permann (CH): proposal to be circulated to Board once received
- S. Newson asked for European trend data of species (PECBMS data), not for Board to decide, rather PECBMS; data come from national coordinators which should give permission

Aim of keeping track of projects discussed and publications produced using EBCC data. EBCC needs to get involved more proactively. To this end, scientific collaboration in projects called for in order to increase our scientific profile. But tracking system still lacking. Small form to be sent out to project groups to be filled in and sent to FJ to this end. A simple form to log receipt of request, contact details, circulation, agreement/conditions/cost of data supply etc would be highly useful.

Actions: All new requests to be taken forward by RG by first distributing them to Board. FJ as Data Officer (together with RG) will contact all project leaders in order to keep track of proceedings of project work. FJ also to develop general protocol to clarify how “requesters” may use EBCC data, how to provide contact details, to provide us with published paper, and how EBCC generally could be involved or should be acknowledged (mention of use of EBCC data in any publication).

TOP 11: Co-authorship policy

Co-authorship policy paper has been discussed previously and is now considered to be in a near final state. But FJ asks for future strategy with respect to data provision and scientific co-operation. Provision of atlas data so far very passive, but some papers do create problems for EBCC since the pathway to create revenue in these instances is cut, for e.g. when EBCC atlas data are simply scanned from the book and used for individual purposes without consultation (although there is no evidence this has happened). FJ's main point was to ask if the balance of scientific gain for EBCC was matched by the provision and charging policy for data. In general, EBCC's engagement with data requests largely raised funds and did not raise EBCC's scientific profile through co-authorships and collaborations. FJ correctly asked if that balance ought to be redressed and there was general agreement in Board that it should where possible.

It would be helpful to clarify what was produced from each data request in the past. Additional agenda item necessary in future? FJ (?) to be asked to produce a meta-analysis of papers produced with EBCC data so far. In future, even when no scientist from EBCC is involved directly with a paper, any publication derived from our data should state in the acknowledgement that the paper is based on EBCC data, probably by using a special form of questionnaire that should be determined in EBCC instructions.

In principle, the system is OK - science policy is at least as important as revenue, especially since data are ageing and the revenue part will become smaller with time. However, requests for PECBMS data will increase, and this needs a clear strategy.

Action: Prague workshop to be used to develop procedure in PECBMS data requests with respect to data rights and eventual revenue and co-authorship policy.

TOP 12: PECBMS update; planning of workshop

Short report from JŠ; written report was delivered to Board via email. Currently the PECBMS Workshop in Prague is the main focus.

Best-practice guide almost finished, and to be distributed by end of October/beginning of November (first to PECBMS co-ordinators, then to Board and others); 250 copies shall be produced. This could be combined with the launch of the updated common bird indicators. Commercial distribution via NHBS possible (for 20.- €), but this would restrict possibility of free distribution on website. But direct distribution to co-workers should be possible without interfering with commercial sale. However, commercial use may be impossible due to the EU funding and respective contract restrictions, but this needed to be checked. Board was supportive of wider distribution through NHBS if practical.

Action: RG to check these matters and take forward.

Publication and outputs of new PECBMS indicators are due very soon. Discussions on technical problems of production of indices and indicators will be held at workshop in Prague. A press release is necessary to accompany the launch of publication(s).

Second EU grant to PECBMS runs out end of March next year, and so far there is no confirmation of further funding; thus lobbying pressure at Commission needs to increase.

Parliamentary question in EU Council to be launched soon to reach long-term agreement. (RSPB is willing to step in financially, if this fails).

Special thanks go to PV, Alena Klvaňová and JŠ for their work to ensure these publications happen, and all the collaborators that provided information and captions to this important EBCC publication. DN extends thanks to RG for his great contribution.

TOP 13: Spatial Modelling Workgroup (SMOG) update

LB reports that large Europe-wide, four-year “SCALES” project has recently been approved by the EU FP7 framework; EBCC “SMOG” team is one of 29 partners; the approved project includes 14 months of post-doctoral work to be financed, which could be started in 2009. The funding will considerably help to improve SMOG methodology. Congratulations go to LB and IB for pushing this forward so successfully.

SMOG is still in need of resolving data ownership problems (similar to PECBMS), which SMOG cannot solve on its own. Distinction necessary between analysis of raw data (done by national co-ordinators) and map product of EBCC/SMOG which is combining national atlas material from various co-operating countries. Within the next two years, ownership problems might be minor, since first methods need to be established and objectives made clear, and since initial outputs will likely be based on a small number of some 20 species only for which national data have to be provided.

Long-term co-operation seems to be a question of scale and the SMOG maps' link to national map outputs; especially if the outputs are Europe-wide maps with very fine resolution, which do

not contradict national products, and there are no ways of extracting raw data from the assembled data.

Another proposed JRC project includes scientific analysis of high nature value farmland areas and their correlation with bird indices; the underlying question is, if bird abundance is higher in high nature value farmlands and if trends there are more positive (Henk Sierdsema and FJ involved in discussion); co-operation of this project with SMOG is envisaged. National partners of EBCC have to be involved in / informed of the process if it goes any further.

TOP 14: SEED BI project update

SEED BI Project will officially be finished within a month, SB has put former report on website (please check there for more details). It gives details on numbers of participants and plots covered in different SEED BI countries: Belarus, Turkey, Lithuania and Macedonia currently have <50 plots each, Romania 61, Bulgaria c. 100 and Poland >470. Numbers of censuses are not yet impressive in many countries, but form a good basis for further development. The “beginners” Belarus, Turkey and Macedonia will be trying to continue the project in their countries. Financing is still insecure in these countries, need to find solutions quickly to prevent schemes from “folding”. Variety of promotion material produced to help find finances. Finance proposals have been produced on a country-by-country basis, since common project would need (new) leadership. Annual costs accruing in countries like Belarus amount to about 6000.- € (in other countries somewhat more). Financing source could be LIFE+ for most countries involved (except Belarus); Swedish Ornithological Society would be a possible funding agent for Belarus due to partnership commitment (similarly Swiss or Dutch partnerships exist), CEMEX is also a possible funding candidate [though IB noted that the latter is less likely in the current financial climate].

Last SEED BI report to be prepared soon and distributed for comments in due course.

Actions: ÅL to take funding application forward to Swedish Ornithological Society; shall receive relevant project proposal and information from RG.

TOP 15: BirdLife International work update

Report on ‘State of Europe’s Birds 2010’ still has no funding, so ambition for contents will be scaled down, and full assessment of all species postponed (i.e. revert to original BiE3 timetable of 2012-2014). IBA monitoring work and intention to produce ‘European IBA Status Report 2010’ also has the same lack of funds; the search for somebody to act as ‘champion’ is ongoing.

Future impacts of climate change on European IBA network are currently being examined in a RSPB-funded project, with the modelling done by the team behind the Climatic Atlas at Durham University. Models in Climatic Atlas will be improved by taking into account distribution of North African species.

Several papers mentioning PECBMS and need for better raptor monitoring are included in special issue of journal AMBIO – which will be launched at the CMS meeting in Abu Dhabi in late October, where international measures (like AEWA) to protect migratory birds of prey and owls will be agreed upon.

Annual ‘Globally Threatened Bird Update’ will be launched soon, to discuss possible changes to species’ status for 2009 IUCN Red List. Red Kite will be one discussion topic; Oriental turtle

dove may be another; other suggestions are welcome. IB asks Board members to please inform their networks once discussions start, and to mention launch in Newsletter as well.

IBA/SPA overlap in EU now increased to 64% (up from 44% in 2003)!

Implementation of the Birds Directive could be changed to a 6-year interval of reporting (as in the Habitats Directive), but simpler methods “wished for” by governments.

Final ICES report of SEQUIN (seabird indicator project) being discussed in October and decided upon by OSPAR meeting delegates.

BirdLife/FACE common policy paper on the Cormorant produced in June, stating to refrain from hunting.

TOP 16: Strategic direction discussion – profile-raising paper

National atlas overview produced by IB; an updated list is planned due to the many comments received; update to be recirculated and later put on website. In future concerted atlas work on pan-European level would be great for common analyses.

LifeWatch is a European network of institutes with large financial means (up to 60 Mio. €!) that are looking for partners that can facilitate data gathering in citizen science and other monitoring projects. RF was contacted by LifeWatch in order for EBCC to draft a proposal concerning a new European atlas, since EBCC is one of very few groups with a wide pan-European network. First, EBCC workshop suggested at the ECCB Conference in 2009 to explore possibilities of such an atlas.

Action: RF to follow up LifeWatch contact and engage in preparing workshop.

TOP 17: Date and venue of Board Meeting in Cáceres in spring 2009

Meeting initially placed at first week in April, but subsequently changed to a later date. The Meeting will now take place in Cáceres from 20 to 23 April 2009 with arrival on Monday 20th, Board Meeting in (and visit of) Conference centre on 21st and 22nd, and field trip and on Thursday 23rd April; departure on same or subsequent day.

TOP 18: Any other business

- AM gives report on the development of the Russian monitoring project (a written report was distributed to Board via e-mail prior to the Meeting). A second atlas report of Moscow City “Birds of Moscow City: from square to square” was published in 2008 and AM presented a hard copy to RG. Work on the atlas of the Moscow Region, however, was not as successful due to lack of volunteers. The same applies to the monitoring project in farmland and forest of European Russia. The meadow birds project was somewhat more successful because funding had been secured.
Corncrake numbers are high (and fluctuating).
- Election of new Board in 2010
Topic postponed until the next meeting in spring, but Board members and others need to think about succession planning and their own positions.
- Montpellier Conference on Agriculture and Biodiversity

Major conference in November. No need of response/activities by EBCC Board. Please respond to David Gibbons at RSPB

- Norwegian web-based training tool (by Magne Husby). The web version will be released in several languages soon. If more endorsement were necessary, Magne should contact EBCC via ÅL. Please see relevant website under www.hint.no/fuglekjennskap/flash/oppgaver.php
- EOU conference in Zürich in August 2009: symposium on detection probabilities planned by Marc Kéry, FJ was asked to give a talk representing EBCC (GB also attending)
- ECCB conference in Prague in September 2009 (at university): RF will attend, also PV will be involved.
- Global Wild Bird Indicator Project
RG gives update on indicator models, which are being broadened out to different regions in the world. Official launch was at BirdLife Conference in Argentina in Sept. 2008, and information exchanged also at symposium during pan-African Congress recently. RG was actively involved at both conferences. Breeding bird surveys have been initiated in several African countries already under leadership of BirdLife network; EBCC can act as partner. Burkina Faso monitoring project suggested by RF are not included in BirdLife plans so far, but RF would follow this up.

RG closes meeting on Wednesday (15th Oct.) and particularly thanks the local organizer FJ for excellent organization, JŠ representing PECBMS, and JCM as the 2010 conference organiser.

Richard Gregory
Chairman

Hans-Günther Bauer
Secretary