

## Minutes of the 47<sup>th</sup> EBCC Board Meeting in Istanbul, Turkey

**March 26-27, 2014**

**Venue:** Hotel Harem, Istanbul, Turkey

**Attending:** Ruud Foppen (RF, Chairman), David Noble (DN, Vice Chairman/Secretary), Anny Anselin (AA, Treasurer/BCN Editor), Aleksi Lehikoinen (AL), Lluís Brotons (LB, Data Request Officer), Danae Portolou (DP), Henning Hjeldberg (HH), Mikhail Kalyakin (MK), Oskars Keišs (OK), Verena Keller (VK, Conference Officer).

**Observers:** Ian Burfield (IB, BirdLife), Szabolcs Nagy (SN, Wetlands Int.), Petr Voříšek (PV, PECBMS),

**Apologies:** Mark Eaton (ME, RSPB)

### **TOP 1. Chairman's welcome**

RF welcomed all at 0910, presented apologies from ME and announced practical arrangements

### **TOP 2. Adoption of agenda, identifying AOB**

DN: Agenda for meeting adopted. Following discussion of problems with DropBox, it was agreed to keep final copies of minutes and other key documents stored in DropBox, with most communication by email, to avoid conflicted copies,

### **TOP 3. Minutes of 46<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, new roles on Board and next AGM:**

DN: Minutes of last meeting agreed, amid discussion of continuing problems with DropBox. Board to continue to use DropBox but also emails.

RF reviewed new roles on new Board, DN as Secretary, AA as Treasurer, and OK as Delegates Officer. Conference Officer position open as VK stepping down. VK explained role, including link to being Chair of Scientific Programme Committee for conferences. SPC is comprised of Board members and local organisers, but process driven by local organisers which varies between conferences. No volunteers so RF offers.

VK asked about EBCC representation on the PECBM steering committee – currently RF & DN. PV explained history, merging of Steering Group and Technical Working Group to reduce number of meetings to one face-to-face plus one by skype per year. **AP1.** All on Board to contact VK or DN about interest in the EBBA2 ASC or the PECBM SG.

Timing of AGM: because of problems at bank (mostly solved now), AA does not have access to account and hence no Financial Report. Nothing has changed critically since last Sept in Cluj so all agreed to move AGM to next meeting and invite delegates as appropriate. **AP2.** OK to send invitation to delegates to attend next AGM when date and venue decided. This will require prior preparation of papers.

#### **TOP 4. Financial update**

RF: Situation temporarily improved due to transferred funds from new Swiss grant, plus funds from BTO & SOVON. These all intended for EBBA so will be spent. Only real EBCC income is €1500 from Rewilding for the Wildlife Comeback work. VK noted that the ASG is discussing use of grant money for EBBA2, to be discussed under Item

#### **TOP 5. EBCC Conference in Cluj**

##### **(i) Debrief and lessons learned**

DN summarised brain dump in Cluj immediately post-conference. IB highlighted lack of representation from Balkan countries, hence need to focus attention there and help them access conference travel funds. Funds for attending the waterbird symposium helped. PV thought absences at Cluj due to recent timing of Barcelona workshop which many attended. Appears that few potential Balkan participants chased conference organisers for reduced funding options. This likely to happen again with PECBM/Atlas workshops in late 2015. SN asked whether EuroNatur funds had been considered as remit includes Balkans and work with BirdLife on Mediterranean issues. Next conference in Albania or Germany (Boris Stromburg key contact).

VK: Much overlap so could merge next EBBA2 workshop with EBCC conference where it will be major topic. Or combine PECBM with Atlas workshops, as there is budget for PECBM. SH: best to combine given similarities in issues. PV: Need to check overlap in attendees. Dual conferences a lot of work. PV: Timing of next PECBM workshop likely to be late 2015 but a lot of preparation which would need to start now. **AP3.** PV to take suggestion to combine to PECBM SGM. **AP4:** DN/VK to report on conference for BCN, based on text on EBCC website, with links to PPTs that are on the conference website.

##### **(ii) Progress on EBCC2013 Proceedings**

No current news from ZS on 2013 Conference Proceedings, nor has AA heard of any for BCN. DN explained that ZS had received few submissions by Nov/Dec before deadline extended. Discussion about whether proceedings are worth effort generally. LB: need to work out process before conference and press conference organisers for this. DN – it is currently left up to local organisers but we could give a stronger steer, especially as situation is changing.

#### **TOP 6. Next EBCC conference 2016**

VK in contact with German organisations offering to host next conference (Kai Gideon of DDA, and Hartmund Meier of Saxony) and provided their proposal. VK: enthusiastic and good organisers. Team already in contact with sponsors. Two options suggested, depending on the final size of the conference. Board asked for decision on location and minimum requirements. Two large rooms (two parallel sessions works best) as well as smaller workshop rooms. One of large rooms should handle

300+ people and second about 150. VK queried whether Heides Park had only one large hall whereas EBCC requires two. To be held in April 2016. AA asked whether date settled. Spring agreed. Late April too late (VK) so late March-early April better depending on university holidays and timing of spring fieldwork. Map shows direct flights to Leipzig. VK concerned about poster session. Board suggestion of serving coffee after poster session but collecting vouchers and answering skill-testing question to get coffee. Suggestion that Kai Gedeon is invited to next Board meeting. **AP5**. Board to consider invitation to next meeting once date and venue settled.

#### **TOP 11. Update on developments in online data portals**

DN provided an update on BTO's BirdTrack International, now with a global data entry facility and in discussion with various national organisations to build national platforms.

VK provided update on Ornitho family (birds only), Chaired by Hans Schmid. Two developments: extended now to Austria (Catalonia to Germany). Gaetan leads on technical development. This includes atlas facilities – as French, Swiss and Italians are using Ornitho to do current atlases. In Catalonia, they are using it to make a Living Atlas – waiting to see how people respond. Management of sites differs between countries. Issues about costs and capacity to take to new countries. New app well advanced – useful for anyone using Ornitho – but not adapted for countries that use Cyrillic alphabet. Useful for foreign visitors, not a complete platform for national organisers. Export of data to national organisers considered very important, particularly where local database capacity is low, could have SH download from database. Has an API to allow local organisers to download data.

Worldbirds (IB) – message from Ian Fisher went to Worldbirds partners giving option to close down, integrate with other systems, or taking over themselves.

Observado (RF) Hoped that Observado would merge with other Dutch portals, negotiations are broken down. SOVON talking with BTO about joining forces on BirdTrack International to create a Dutch portal – a live atlas portal in Dutch – for atlasing and supporting the European Bird Atlas, although they already have an atlas portal. HH asked about other Observado countries such as Belgium. Observado will continue there, but focus on casual observations.

SN – WI has promoted Observado for waterbird monitoring in Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia – 14 countries in total (Africa/Europe/Asia), not Belarus). System now includes the simple IWC form. But not keen to have multiple systems in the same countries, Portugal interested for IWC. VK: Germany keen to use Ornitho for IWC if monies become available. Swiss also interested. VK: important point, e.g in Russia that the developers of the online platform are just down the hall. AA noted problem in Belgium, in not having access to the data or the work by the developers, and costs to change. SN: went for cheapest and only available system, you can download the whole data set for security. Use is for collecting observer data, but not for archiving and storing the data. SN: some but not all countries have the capacity to take this forward by expanding the IWC element (at some cost).

PV: EBCC not in position to recommend the platform for a particular country but this summer could be a good opportunity for countries to test competing portals. RF: makes no sense for countries to have to go to many portals – it should be possible to construct a common data sharing / storing facility for this purpose. Taking this forward is key, and getting enough funds. SN: what about GBIF? SH: difficult to say which is best – it goes beyond the atlas, is often outside the responsibility of the

EBCC partners, and the situation is constantly changing. EBCC/EBBA2 atlas role to provide advice on which portal to use for atlasing. VK: would like to get the people involved in the online recording portals to produce this 'best practice guide' for portals but they see it as an EBCC role. LB – this is happening, not sure it needs to be formalised. RF: pilot project with Atlas data planned, including technical issues. HH: do we know how many portals there are in Europe? No – PV has list of countries that have or want online portals. PV: we shouldn't invest time to collect this at national level – it is constantly changing. VK: EBP have 99% information of these portals. EurobirdsPortals could have main responsibility for this.

#### **TOP 10. Euro Bird Portal Project update**

RF: Impressed by developments in the EuroBirdsPortal project (EBP) and suggests we send an Observer to their meetings to report to EBCC. EBP building momentum but so far focusing on bird movements initially rather than overlap too much with Bird Atlas. VK: difference in aims of European Atlas – several years duration and simple requirements, e.g. some information on breeding birds in Moldova – compared to some of the EBP research objectives. Most analyses will focus on movements of migratory birds, mainly in western Europe. Many on Board connected to project including RF (at last meeting representing EBCC) and LB. Other Board members have colleagues in EBP (DN, VK, HH). All agreed that EBCC should have an official rep on EBP Board. RF offers. DN: EuroBirdsPortal also looking for funds; there could be synergies and competition in funding. DN suggested inviting representative from EBP to EBCC Board, but LB or RF could cover this. PV: EBP not only competition for funds but also observers. EBCC current role at these meetings is to represent strategic views. SN: an EBCC job to help them develop a clearer strategic monitoring strategy. PV: main aim of most portals is to collect and share data whereas EBCC role is use of data.

#### **TOP 7. Report from Delegate Officer:**

OK working with JS and AA on updating the Delegate list posted in March. There have since been two changes. Three possible candidates are suggested for Georgia: Alexander Abuladze (lives in Estonia), Brecht Verhulst and Mary-Kate Ugrehelidze. Abuladze known to PV & SN but seldom communicates. SN could ask contacts for advice on these candidates. VK: we should engage with new Georgian NGO – although not yet an official BL affiliate. **AP6:** ask Mary Kate and consult Georgian NGO on who should be the second delegate.

Letter received complaining about one of the Armenian delegates – ignore as not our role.

#### **TOP 8. Bird Census News**

AA intends to step down from BCN role (after many years!) as no longer allowed any official time. Following discussion, a team to take over was agreed including AA, ME and HH and also involving Olga Voltzit (Moscow Museum) who is good at layout and did the last edition.

AA: Issue last circulated was second for 2012. So some catching up of 2013 (1 & 2 – to be published together as one) and also 2014 to do. One of the 2013 issues was meant to be Proceedings of the last conference but due to no submissions, decided to devote this double issue to EBBA2. Team has discussed content: One article expected on EBBA2 methods – SH/VK/PV; other articles could be on new atlas projects in Spain, Greece or Denmark. AA to talk to PV and SH about other new national atlas projects that might be appropriate, e.g. Croatia. Other potential articles include capacity

building in the Turkish Atlas workshop, a report on the Russian Atlas (to inspire), something from Magne Husby on the online Bird Identification initiative, book reviews and a report on the Cluj conference. Deadline is June/early July for this 2013 double-issue. Monitoring articles could be used for 2014 issue (also might be double). AA asked about overlap with EBCC website – not a problem.

AA asks Board to circulate the link to the new issues to all contacts; this is an important role. AA to send to delegates, PV will send to PECBM contacts. PV will also send two paragraphs on Turkish workshop to all delegates, post on website, and include in newsletter.

#### **TOP 9 (a) Update on Turkish Atlas meeting (Kerem B)**

KB: Comprised two days of fieldwork and a one day workshop. Invited all potentially interested; those with proven record of atlas work (e.g regional atlases such as the Anatolian Diagonal), major contributors to Kusbank, academics with interests in this area, and avoided some who would 'mess up the meeting'. Workshop went well, although Uygur Osemi & Jose Tavares unable to attend. EBCC presence was a big help to convey seriousness of intent, context of European Atlas plans, and that the time is right for a Turkish Atlas. KB had doubts after unsuccessful 2002 atlas although survey forms and thinking helpful. Will evolve. Needs to be appealing: key is to motivate. The weekend fieldwork was successful in bringing together 22 people to experience training and spread word (most from Istanbul but also other cities).

VK: Board very impressed by the interest and support. DN: a good team with complementary expertise including those with IT skills (Ingen) and organising (Dielek). WWF contact has already produced a two-page summary to circulate to senior WWF people. KB: 'good to have an institute behind to support but not in front to cause trouble'. Idea is to start and see what happens. RF/AA suggested a report for BCN.

#### **TOP 9 (b) EBBA2 - Reporting back on ASC**

VK: Teams led by SH & PV providing lots of support to many countries on atlas work (European and national). Work ongoing to encourage and support foreign birders visiting atlas countries. Identified tasks for coming years: country priorities, technical support from SH for national atlases, communications, need to create a European database and test methods of data exchange (expertise available at ICO).

PV fundraising efforts, mainly national-based unsuccessful, some success internationally, esp from a Swiss Foundation of €40k per year until 2019/20, together with data supply funds from PECBM, and small amount from BTO & SOVON. We need more staff resources at CSO (assistant) subject to discussion with PECBM – job mainly communication, plus budget for supporting SH at ICO (a database person), SH time in 2014 is paid for by EUBON, plan is to shift tasks and use ICO expertise. ICO to take forward. With these additional possibilities, we should go forward; also need country financial support – e.g for Russia not in Turkey. Also on table, is request for funds for BirdTrack international language support – possibly too early – need to check with countries what they would be likely to use, many issues to resolve. Ornitho another possibility.

Possibility of sponsorship by Meopta for European Atlas – ASC considering, as dealing with Zeiss/Swaroski potentially more difficult although plan to approach them first. Waiting to hear back.  
**AP7:** PV to negotiate further, with subsequent communication from the Board.

#### **TOP 9 (c) Russian Atlas update**

MK: Russian Atlas situation 'rather good'. Now ca 300 squares covered. Last season, there were funds to support fieldwork which increased coverage. More difficult next year due to need to travel to more distant areas. A new online platform – sufficient for these purposes – established 5 months ago by a programmer in Moscow Museum mainly as a tool for collecting casual records; most data will come in via square reports. Maps of coverage show gaps, especially around Caucasus and northern areas. Donated funds from Ake's book provided €6k, plus small grants from Birds in Russia. Some proposals in but still €5k less than last year (cf swiss grant) so more needed. Critical time this field season and will know by the end of April how much extra needed. Need to start organising special expeditions to visit remote territories. One hour counts will be started this year.

#### **TOP 12. Report on PECBMS and Data Requests**

PV: Business as usual thanks to new grant for next three years, trends and indicators to be produced this summer. Increasing pressure from data requests and queries, which are also getting more complicated, and take time for PV and team to respond, communicating with requestor and with national coordinators. Use different approaches to handle these, need to get others involved in these requests. PV: many come with money. DN: some funds should come to national coordinators, who have their own arrangements. LB: aim is to strengthen the network, talking with Frederic Jiguet, what is going to be the role of EBCC or PECBM, what do we want from this and how can we use this to support the scientific network. Next workshop (autumn 2015, venue not decided) would be on data access and use, development on new indicators. LB: need a process to deal with these.

#### **TOP 13. Update on current & previous collaborations/publications**

SCALES: closing down with mainly administrative work ongoing.

EUBON: a new €9M project started last year. The European contribution to GeoBON, EUBON initiative is to mobilise environmental and biodiversity data, funded through 7<sup>th</sup> Framework programme in Europe. LB's institute involved via previous link to SCALES. Linked to IPBS platform. EUBON aims to mobilise and analyse. 30 partners, LB and EBCC involved in small way in several work programmes. Project link between IPBES and original data-holders. GBiF also a partner. Trends and changes in distribution. Working on big infrastructures. LB – will keep an eye on the infrastructure and citizen science elements but difficult to work out how to adapt to their concept. RDG also involved in climate-change indicators, part of the indicators and trends elements. Funds for two post-docs: to go further than in SCALES but apart from some scientific publications on spatial modelling, the EBCC role not strong. Navigating these big projects is complex. Opportunity – idea was to get SH a one year postdoc in EUBON since he was already EBCC. Other one is to go for a postdoc with monitoring experience – hence Nicolas Titieux from Lux/Belgium and also in EBCC research network. SH started at start of 2014; NT started on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Start up meeting held and next meeting in April/May in Crete. Much planned with multi-taxa work, mapping, AquaMap.

Two important things re EBCC:

- 1) Citizen science – EBCC not currently considered big enough player, could we highlight PECBM network in this
- 2) Request from Enrique Peirera for GeoBON project. They have to build a biodiversity network, open access and freely available. LB: PECBM data probably step too far, especially given national feelings but the old Atlas data might be suitable, later the new Atlas data.

RF –how does EBCC get involved in these large science projects, given our volunteer capacity? LB: do we take the PECBM approach RF: we should use to get our aims, like the new Atlas, done. LB: need to get on the projects (e.g. RDG is on one and LB is on another) but capacity an issue. SN – that is the smart strategy. VK: Led by Leipzig and might be possibility for next EBCC conference, EBCC and LB's institute at table. Discussion of pros and cons of EUMON. **AP8**: a small group should take these issues forward, to strengthen and extend our network, think smarter, and consider the larger issue of data flow and access.

#### **TOP 14. Wildlife Comeback in Europe project**

RF/IB: Launched in London just after conference. Good media coverage and extensive outreach due to Rewilding Europe's media savvy. Proved that it was possible to bring together data from different sources including scarce ones. Christina Ieronymidou subsequently employed on Birds Directive work. Plan for paper perhaps on bird growth rate analyses by Petr, Jana & Ruud. Some funds came to EBCC. RF: might be a follow-up project, building on experience gained from collating and analysing data on rare birds. PV: can use TRIM on these data, but need to think whether a good idea a topic for next PECBM workshop.

#### **TOP 15. Recent EBCC data requests**

LB has updated data request list. Not many apart from those associated with EUBON. Two requests – one from Spain on vultures, and one, a PhD on rooks, and one from Enrique Peirera to be discussed tomorrow. Board agrees to data requests.

Looking at list of papers that include EBCC authors, sometimes listing EBCC, or RSPB, or BLI or PECBM as their affiliation – LB raised the issues of branding, consistency and the need to update with current EBCC affiliates. **AP9**: Issue to be raised at next PECBM steering group.

#### **TOP 16. Report from BirdLife International – Ian Burfield**

Birds Directive reporting going well, managed by Rob Pople supported by Christina Ieronymidou. Deadline for member states was end of Dec: 12 were on time, 25 of 27 by end of Feb, followed by data quality checks and queries back to Member States. Two countries did not deliver: Slovenia expected soon: Greece has defaulted, BL now discussing options with HOS. Now focusing on non-EU countries. Small contracts set up and information starting to be received from those – e.g. Russia, Serbia, Belarus. Prioritising species for which these countries have a significant part of the population. About a month behind schedule but hoping to finish by May. New assistant employed, with extensive bird knowledge. Next meeting – June. Then red list assessments – spring and summer – to be finished by Sept, then need to produce report by end of year (database, factsheets, etc). BiE3 not part of the deliverable but next stage, with a focus on producing a scientific red-list



publication instead of a report. Data being used for other work, such as AIWA. Rob & Christina's jobs end in Dec 2014.

Global Red List Assessments: discussing taxonomies (e.g. Clements). Tax Working Group involving Nigel Collar has been working on rules on new taxonomy based on attribute rules. Launching new HBW illustrated checklist for non-passerines this summer, in July. Lots of topics on BL forums. Coreys Shearwater to Atlantic and Mediterranean; Houbara Bustard split. Lammergeier (now Bearded Vulture) downgraded. There is a new project looking at issue of illegal hunting/killing in Mediterranean (all species), to develop repeatable methods, have recruited Anne Laubachet – originally from Tour du Valat – experienced in waterbirds and N Africa and research, to start in June.

Staff changes at BirdLife: Marco Lambertini going to head up WWF Switzerland. Hazel Thompson interim CEO. Shortlist of three recruitment agencies to find new CEO. Dir of Policy Leon Bennun leaving, to be replaced in interim by Melanie Heath. Hence, IB likely to have to give up some EBCC/EBBA2 duties. His successor is Ivan Ramirez, already managing, starting to take over duties – will work from home in Spain. This could be end of IB's involvement. RF thanks IB on behalf of Board, for important role and advice over the last 12 years.

#### **TOP 17. Wetlands International update (Szabolcs Nagy)**

SN now a Senior Adviser to WI (but not employed by them). WI inputting trend reporting for AEWA report at flyway scale. Birds Directive trend reporting being done for European part of the population and a third method at the European population level stratified by populations. Hence, three levels but not for all species. Sites allocated to flyways and then running TRIM analyses. To be published as pdfs – one page per species – with supporting information online.

WI created European Association of WI comprised of member NGOs interested in wetland conservation in Europe (eg river restoration in Spain, Tour du Valat). Successful in getting grant seeded by export of IWC data. Will be supported by WI's Tom Langendoen, and Lammert Hilarides part time for this, also SN in networking. Developing indicators for guilds – species with similar ecology, for coastal birds including seaducks, and developing methods of estimating trends in relation to harvest (a special group) and other activities related to WFD.

Following workshop on colonial waterbird monitoring in Cluj, SN has written up concept note, and contacted Ross Wanless of seabird group – to undertake scoping study to assess monitoring and gaps. Submitted to AEWA but SN likely to search for alternative funding. Keen to hear what EBCC thinks its role should be. Short discussion on how best to determine what is going on in these species groups across Europe, without too many overlapping communications.

#### **TOP 18. EBCC website – David Noble**

EBCC website hosted at same place as CSO website. Now getting old, growing administration costs. CSO considering moving to a new system called JUMAR which is freeware and has created a test new website on white stork including some interactive elements – checking whether nests occupied or not.

Questions for Board: (1) small improvements are possible now, (2) move to a new system – current will probably be maintainable – there will be transition costs – the same as CSO or something



different. RF – we don't have to make the decision right now and we might go for separate websites, e.g. one for the European Atlas

Comments on website. HH: many of the country reports on the website are out of date. SN: WI Quarterly Newsletter getting full too fast, so Tom Langendoen developed a method of putting short summaries and links to the Waterbird Forum on many topics, technical details as a way of quick communication, about 15% of his time. AL: Good to have a Facebook account for new news. Jana has some experience in this. RF/IB – New communications officer planned, look for new skills and make best use of existing skills in team (eg JS) when we are recruiting. LB: In terms of completely new website, getting something for the Atlas is urgent, highest priority, we need it this summer. DN: Do we need specifications for a new website? RF: what is the best way forward. Would a CSO route be the best way forward, PV already has a six page document on what is needed. **AP11:** Proceed with Atlas website

#### **TOP 19. EURAPMON update and proposal**

Ian Burfield reported on five year project set up by Guy Dukes & Paola Movalli to bring together information from the raptor-population-monitoring and the toxicology-in-raptor communities to improve knowledge. Ends in spring 2015. Large budget but mainly for networking not for collecting data. EBCC not involved but BirdLife (ie IB) involved via Steering Group. Started well with large meetings of raptor experts, producing paper on the use of raptors for monitoring I (the 'with raptors' side) but the 'for raptors' side has proved more difficult. Project failed midterm evaluation so some changes in leadership. Group currently deciding on what to do next, including applying for a second stage. One proposed element is to expand and renew the Raptor Monitoring guide (Hardey et al.) to make European rather than British, raising standards in monitoring raptors. DN asked whether EBCC was interested in getting involved in this element, or the whole project. Decision is that EBCC is happy to get involved in production of the guide but will decide later on the rest.

#### **TOP 20. News from Europe**

VK engaged with COST project, led by Jim Groombridge and colleagues from Kent University and CK was able to inform them about the monitoring (part of one package) of the EBCC. AvK from NL there.

DP: CBM continuing but funding uncertain. Pilot work on Pelicans starting, also counts of herons, last done 10y ago, but not storks. Need more expertise: lots of people interested but lack of knowledge a constraint. Starting work on the new Atlas, developing methods with SH, using Greek 10k grid.

AL: Received five year grant, so will have a caretaker looking after the monitoring in Finland while he undertakes various research project. New report on the Swedish bird monitoring from Ake Lindstrom now available.

HH: Started new national atlas on March 1<sup>st</sup> for next four years – exactly EBBA2 period, people enthusiastic, many workshops & talks. Everything works online (not a single letter). Published trends over last 15 years in Danish journal and would like to send links (discussed with AA). HH looking for funds to undertake research to raise science profile

AA: Worked with three Belgium organisations on trends to produce a joint report summarising information provided to EC including trends, range, one page for each species summarising status on

a truly national scale. Atlas not started yet, main difficulty is finding funding, so exploring other methods, for example using CBM.

RF: Dutch atlas in its second year. Number of squares allocated good but not all counted. Aim is to do in three years.

MK: Apart from Russian Atlas, a group is planning programme of central conferences on status of rare species in central part of European Russia. MK is on Committee, covers ca 40 species. Also upcoming conference in Kazakhan, and planned coordination with other countries.

LB: New atlas starting in Spain linked to developments on EBBA2 (SEO). There will be Catalanian contribution, but mainly local coordination not yet in analyses or modelling.

OK: Latvia theoretically started to collect data last year but online element not ready so this year. Called European Breeding Atlas, also repeat of farmland plots to assess change. Common Bird Monitoring funding not secure.

### **TOP 23. Date & venue for Board meeting in autumn 2014**

OK offered Latvia ('so he doesn't have to claim travel expenses') and HH offered Copenhagen again ('doesn't want force us'). VK also noted offer from Portugal, which could be combined with their atlas work. RF to talk to Joao Rabaca and HH. Discussed possible dates. First three weeks in Sept and all Nov not good; most weeks in Oct fine but 2<sup>nd</sup> week best. **AP10.** DN to send doodle poll for dates.

### **TOP 21. Future Directions of EBCC**

Discussion of future directions of EBCC identified the following issues to explore further:

Extension of species set – beyond common birds

Positioning of EBCC

- Engaging with research networks
- Engaging with other national NGOs and recording societies
- Engaging with policy instruments

Capacity within EBCC

Exporting expertise within the flyway (Africa and Asia)

Data Strategy and open access to data

Use of occasional records

Scope of EBCC – demographics, wintering trends, casual bird recording, migration

SN: turn question around – what we do? LB: where are we now and where do we want to go? SN: Not just about conservation and management, about research to inform, focus on activities that inform. All happy with the wording in our current mission statement.

PV: not just about where birds are and how many but why – this is part of the mission. LB: PECBM and Atlas provide the data to enable understanding and ways to describe information – with secondary aims to research questions (to understand changes), to inform policy and to help national network partners. SN: useful to distinguish difference between influencing policy and providing policy-relevant information, added value to having data in a central place – to facilitate use. LB: This is the problem, researchers come to EBCC just as a source of data. SN: Ask why would you contribute data to a particular researcher? To increase the value of the data. VK: If EBCC wants to raise its

profile in Europe, it should focus on European-wide analyses. Do not forget the technical details – e.g. with EURING in getting information from national offices – in doing this. RF: need clear guidelines on EBCC priorities – eg on better understanding the changes (research). PV: this would help him in dealing with these requests. SN: also future projections, what we expect. RF: this is about research, but what about informing policy. PV: EU is looking to us to answer questions about agr-env schemes (because of their high profile), e.g. with Ariel's questions about effectiveness of policy. PV: We provide a message and the policy people advise us. SN: FBI only tells you what the overall status of farmland birds – it is not the test of the effectiveness of AES. Could we provide general guidelines on what you need to do to assess this – all countries national schemes could benefit from this. OK: his government tries to use the FBI in this way, needs an education element, DP agrees. VK: PECBM good example, as other partners involved. IB: we need capacity in EBCC to help, there is money available and it would be in a good position. AL: Should we write an opinion paper to raise profile of FBI and AES issue, provide guidelines and examples (LB: we have additional capacity with EUBON and postdocs). RF: Take forward a position paper, using the FBI as an example. and about the atlas data which will also soon be here. VK: Atlas will establish EBCC network as the experts in bird monitoring in Europe. SN: This has been focused on Europe but think about other specialist groups – eg AEWA and national requirements. RF: nice to have something ready for next Board meeting, but also thinking about the next round of funding. SN: Provided some initial information on criteria for applications to EU Life Operating Grants to European NGOs. Has to be an NGO network, and you have to have members– need to investigate. Has to be European, established more than 2 years, independent (not govt or business). Suggests some warming up talks. The EBCC might need to change their statutes, as did WI.

## **TOP 22. Any other business**

Magne Husby sends message that Norwegian-based BIRDID course going well in Serbia and Latvia.

Ruud Foppen  
Chairman

David Noble  
Secretary