

## **Draft minutes of 59<sup>th</sup> EBCC Board meeting**

**Venue:** by videoconference - zoom

**Date:** 21–22 April 2020

**Attendance:** Mark Eaton (Chair, ME), Verena Keller (Vice Chair, VK), Dawn Balmer (Secretary, DB), Chris van Turnhout (Treasurer, CvT), Aleksi Lehikoinen (AL), Mikhail Kalyakin (MK), Danae Portolou (DP), Petr Voříšek (PV), Alena Klvaňová (AK), Anna Staneva (AS), Sergi Herrando (SH), Gabriel Gargallo (GG), Ivan Ramirez (IR), Szabolcs Nagy (SN), Ainars Aunins (AA), Jean-Yves Paquet (J-YP), Lluís Brotons (LB), Ruud Foppen (RF).

### **Tuesday 21 April**

#### **1. Welcome and adoption of agenda**

We were welcomed to the Board meeting by ME. Apologies were received from HH. The agenda was adopted, with the addition of the annual AGM to Any Other Business.

#### **2. Minutes and Actions of 58<sup>th</sup> EBCC Board meeting in Sempach**

Action points will be mentioned under each agenda point. DP provided an update on BirdID and HH provided update on attendance at previous conferences which will be referred to during the meeting.

#### **3. Next EBCC conference 2022**

VK informed us that a new venue has been found at the Swiss Museum of Transport in Lucerne (and was used for launch of Swiss Atlas). The local organising team will negotiate with the conference centre over price – meals at a lower price for example. Local army facilities can be used for accommodation and are very reasonable price. The venue has a very large conference hall (600, seating on the level), a second lecture hall can seat 190 people and additional rooms in the venue can be used for the Board Meeting and workshops. AL asked where the conference proceedings might go as there had been problems after Cluj and Evora. The Swiss organising team are open to proposals and BCN was considered a good idea. VK will talk to colleagues about proceedings. The organising team will also look into options for remote attendance. We agreed the need to communicate the dates and location to the EBCC community in the next EBCC Newsletter which is planned for June. SOI will aim to have considerable external funding so the conference fees are low. Travel costs are likely to be relatively low (good train links); the hosts are keen to work towards minimising the environmental impact of the conference e.g. vegetarian meals, CO<sub>2</sub> compensation fund. VK will be the Organising Committee link to be the Scientific Committee. AL offered to be Chair of the Scientific Committee. Role of the Scientific Committee is to invite plenary speakers, assess talks, allocate talks in the timetable. ME, J-YP, VK, AA, IR, DB all offered to join the Scientific Committee.

**59-1 AP: Announce dates and location of next EBCC conference in June newsletter (VK, AK)**

#### 4. An EBCC response to Coronavirus?

The EBCC network across Europe will be being impacted by Covid-19 to a varying extent, both at a personal level and in the way monitoring, research and conservation organisations are able to continue their work programmes, and how individuals are able to participate in fieldwork.

We discussed whether EBCC should do anything in response to this. AK has already contacted all PECBMS Coordinators across Europe to ask what the situation is in their countries. From the feedback so far, the situation is varied – some countries are allowed to continue fieldwork whilst others are not. IR commented that the financial risk of coronavirus was high for many organisations. We agreed a message from the Board to the EBCC community would be useful and it would also be an opportunity to contact the delegates and scheme organisers to populate a google sheet that covers not just PECBMS but also ringing, nest recording, waterbird counts, garden surveys, online recording schemes that feed through to EBP. We should capture the dates and nature of the restrictions.

We had some discussion around the value of late breeding bird survey visits only. As well as the potential scientific value, we should also think of the social side – important to keep enthusiasm high, so keen to support and encourage volunteers. We agreed we would strongly advise late visits if restrictions allow. Data from schemes are used for other reasons and not just trend production. It will be important to get the message across to national coordinators that any data collected is valuable and that if restrictions allow, encourage late visits.

**59-2 AP: Write a short letter that can be sent to the EBCC community via a newsletter and social media (ME, IR, AK)**

**59-3 AP: Create a google sheet to capture information about covid19 restrictions on fieldwork across all core monitoring areas (DP) and send to delegates (HH, ME)**

#### 5. Update on communications (DP, AK, ME)

There have been two issues of the EBCC Newsletter published since the last meeting, reaching 460 recipients, and had an open rate >50% (which is good!). On Facebook, a new EBCC page has been created EBBA2 has changed to EBCC and has 133 followers. There have been around 10 posts so far but the aim is to increase the number of posts so please let AK know if you have material. The aim is to launch the new EBCC website on 10 June to coincide with next EBCC Newsletter. AK will be able to share the website pre-launch for comment in mid-May. Our Twitter account has 280 followers. We have not yet combined EBBA2 and EBP accounts into single EBCC account. The EBP account is reasonably active in the spring with migration stories to promote. The plan is to tweet from EBCC about EBP and encourage EBP to move over to EBCC in the coming months. EBP always has new results to share and will be a good source of followers. DP is updating information on monitoring schemes and is preparing a google form to share.

**59-4 AP: Please send news to AK by end of May (All)**

**59-5 AP: Promote the link for signing up for the newsletter a week before so we can promote via Twitter and Facebook (All)**

#### 6. PECBMS progress report

Species trends and indices were updated and published in December 2019 and promoted by social media. They were based on data from 28 European countries and 170 common bird species for the period 1980-2017. They also calculated EU27 (excluding UK) indicators and delivered them to

EUROSTAT.

There has been further work on a new forest bird indicator for EU policy purposes as agreed at the mini workshop in Solsona. Enya O'Reilly & Simon Butler (University of East Anglia) made progress on species selection for the indicator, working with regional contacts who could input to regional species lists. Work will focus on new way to select the species for the Forest Bird Indicator and prepare the methods to implement. The task regarding the forest bird species selection in the tender is to develop the method and explore the ways how to implement it in PECBMS indicators production until the end of the tender (12/2022).

New online tools for the collection of TRIM and RTRIM output files from national coordinators and online tool for the collection of site level data are in preparation. The TRIM and RTRIM online tools are being tested. The online tools will help coordinators update data in a much easier way. There are still data coming from TRIM rather than RTRIM. The checking tools from EBBA2 were really valuable and it's hoped to provide something similar for PECBMS.

In November CSO applied for a EC tender called "Technical and scientific support in relation to the delivery and development of wild bird indicators for the EU", and heard in December that they successfully passed the evaluation of the contract. Czech Society for Ornithology (CSO) is the main tenderer with RSPB, Stitching BirdLife Europe, Catalan Institute for Ornithology (ICO) and University of East Anglia (UEA) as the subcontractors. A Kick-off meeting is planned for this new tender.

PECBMS is involved in a grant with University of Sheffield where the site-level data gathered by PECBMS will be used. The budget for CSO is £6526 pounds per year for three years (2020-22) to support the work in site data collation, checking, processing, provision etc. Anna Gamero is responsible for the work and is secured with the funding.

An application for a Horizon 2020 project has been submitted and awaiting a decision. CSO are working on behalf of EBCC as a partner in the project which is coordinated by Finnish Environment Institute (SKYE).

AK attended the Butterfly Conservation Europe conference in Laufen, Germany in December 2019 and gave a talk about developing a bird monitoring network. This will hopefully lead to new ways to cooperate and improve outputs.

In December 6th a leaflet was published presenting the trends of 170 common European bird species based on data from 28 countries covering 38 years (1980–2017).

In January 2019 the Interim technical and financial report and Final technical and financial report (2017–2019) on the New Generation of European Wild Bird Indicators (NGEWBI) EC grant was delivered. There is ongoing work on a new data paper, with the aim to publish in *Scientific Data*; the manuscript is in circulation.

The PECBMS Steering and Technical group meeting was held online (instead of Prague) in March and they discussed the urgent need to improve indicator production. They agreed to increase the number of species reported on in PECBMS and also discussed the communication strategy and agreed to meet on a regular basis by video conference. They need to explore species specific monitoring programmes in Europe in order to implement the rare, scarce and colonial breeding birds.

CVT commented that since he had joined the PECBMS committee he had realised what a big job is involved in collating and analysing the data. We recognised the huge amount of work done, and thanked AK for her work.

MK said that Russia is ready to join PECBMS. Eva Silarova is in touch with Anton Morkovin and will progress this. MK explained they have Russian data for 6–10 years for the Moscow region.

## **7. Euro Bird Portal (GG) – future developments and products**

There was a meeting of EBP in early March in Barcelona. Russia has now formally joined the EBP partnership. There are still a few countries in the partnership that are not yet providing data because the data are not in good enough shape. The quality of data continues to improve; there has been an increase in the proportion of records that come from complete lists though there is still a lot of work to do – in 2019 just under 30% of records were in complete lists. There has been an increase in coverage across the years, especially in the Iberian Pen and NE Europe. In Sweden, complete lists are now permitted in the system, and Finland are working to get complete lists enabled. There is now better geographical coverage all through the year. Work on the 'Best practice guidelines' continues and they should have a final version by end of the year.

Regarding guidelines on collecting complete lists, there are five basic recommendations that EBP partners hope to agree on:

1. Re-confirm the list is complete (the user should confirm that has recorded all species that has been able to identify).
2. Collect start time and duration (or start and end times).
3. Location should refer to observer location (not that of the bird)?
4. Collect information about the area surveyed or travelled (e.g. the number of km travelled or the radius of the area surveyed or the observer track).
5. Include counts: rough counts much better than no counts at all.

At the moment, EBP is only collecting data from the primary database in each country e.g. in UK collecting data from BirdTrack (and not ebird). They are working to collect data from secondary sources, but need to be cautious and ensure that data are properly checked, the EBP partner in the given area agrees for the data to be used at the EBP level, the EBP partner in the given area can use the data for its own purposes and the data can be submitted automatically to the EBP central data repository using the available automated data connectivity procedures.

Regarding the ESFA project, the first request was for bird occurrence and observation effort information aggregated by month and NUTS3 level based on EBP data from 2019 for the 50 EFSA avian influenza surveillance target bird species. The second request was for maps based on EBP and EURING data showing monthly distributional patterns and connectivity information of the 50 EFSA avian influenza surveillance target bird species. EBP have worked with EURING, and will re-use the BTO's Migration Mapping Tool. The contract will finish in 2021 and there is good news in that EFSA are interested in continuing work, perhaps a further 50,000€.

GG talked through slides around developing data use policy for EBP:

1. Data use for EBP own products
2. Data use for products specifically developed for third parties
3. Data use by third parties

GG presented the suggested terms of use of data (and shared in a Powerpoint for the meeting) which are still to be agreed by EBP partners.

Hungary, Bulgaria and part of Germany are the only countries not submitting automatically. In Iceland they mostly use eBird and there is difficulty in getting a partner in Iceland – GG has tried but

they were initially reluctant to get involved in a long-term partnership. eBird would readily provide the data for Iceland.

AL asked if there could be some common principles in the terms and conditions that cover EBP, EBBA2, PECMBS.

#### **8. News from BirdLife International**

The population status of birds in the EU update was completed and submitted to the European Topic Centre on 15th April. The update will be published on the EC's web site EIONET, most likely in May, but there is no confirmed date yet. Non-EU data will be worked on after the EU data has been delivered.

BirdLife is currently analysing the results of the EU population status assessment against Birds Directive annexes, AEWA, International Species action Plans, conservation measures, threats etc., which will feed into the State of Nature in the EU 2020 Report. The latter will be released as a draft for consultation in June; a final report will be published during the last trimester of 2020. Preparations are going very well.

Important 2020 EU deadlines are postponed, including the EU Biodiversity Strategy launch postponed to 29th April. For more details on different deadlines: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy-environment/news/leaked-full-list-of-delayed-european-green-deal-initiatives/>.

Red List Recovery has received good support from the EU. Work has continued on Horizon 2020. Focus is now on analysing priorities for funding for next year. There is an idea for a satellite tracking portal, like EBP, but very early stages.

#### **9. News from Wetland International**

We discussed the proposal for a staggered cycle for waterbird and AEWA-listed seabird monitoring in Europe. The aim is to produce population estimates every six years, not population trends. Many monitoring schemes are good enough to produce trends, but population estimates are often not possible based on the usual IWC counts. There are some capacity issues in Africa but should be okay in most of Europe to undertake such a plan. We talked about the UK Non-estuarine Waterbird Survey and the attempt to cover non-estuarine habitats, using sample areas, which could then be used to produce population estimates, as a good model.

Need to consider the methods for highly aggregated species. Suggest grouping birds into six blocks: Colonial, Dispersed, Vocalisation, IWC, goose & swan and offshore, and also need to consider whether any species can be surveyed together in the winter or breeding season (use similar habitats?). Resourcing would be an issue but some groups of species might attract more funding than others e.g. colonial birds. Regarding offshore species, it would be essential to cover in the same year. Next steps are to finalise the proposal, agree with partners, run it past the AEWA technical panel and present the proposal to the meeting of the parties of AEWA resolution. VK commented that from a strategic point of EBCC, this is an important step forward to try to increase the number of species that we cover. We agreed the plan is very ambitious and considered whether establishing a pilot study for one group would be a first step forward. SN said he would annotate a species list to flag up priority/threatened and action plan species. DP asked whether the EBCC website could be used to host a plan for when national censuses are planned so that other countries can see and where possible align the timing of the count. We suggested gathering information from countries about their plans and potentially collate information on methods used across different countries.

**59-6 AP: Plan a small group (VK, JYP, ME, CVT, SN) to convene a meeting to take discussions forward and consider communication with the EBCC community.**

Wetlands International are busy with the conservation status report which tries to update population size for species covered by Afro-Asian waterbird partnership. There is an effort to try to analyse the PECBMS data but split by populations (flyways), and also thinking about developing indicators for other waterbirds.

## **10. Update on other collaborations (ME)**

### **Rewilding Europe**

ME, Ruud Foppen and AS have been in discussion with Rewilding Europe about revising the 'Wildlife Comeback' report that EBCC were partners in, in 2013 (<https://rewildingeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Wildlife-Comeback-in-Europe-the-recovery-of-selected-mammal-and-bird-species.pdf>). Initial discussions with Frans Schepers (Managing Director) were fruitful and we agreed a partnership between Rewilding Europe, ZSL, BirdLife and the EBCC as before. The project then passed onto one of Frans's team, Alexandros Karamanlidis, and there was no progress despite some discussions between ME, AS and Ian Burfield and some prompting from our side. Fran has now taken up the reins (Alexandros is leaving) and we hope to make better progress.

The plan is to produce an updated report for publication sometime in mid/late 2022, but also to produce a paper for peer-reviewed publication – the exact nature of this is not yet clear though ME suspects ZSL may have developed some thoughts on this around identifying drivers of species recovery which he expects to hear in a meeting next week.

The report itself will cover mammals and birds, as before, but aiming for a slimmed down approach on the rather bulky report from last time. Obviously the EBBA2 maps will be very important (and much better than anything available for mammals!).

We have not yet discussed roles or resources but ME hopes this will happen shortly – he understands that Rewilding Europe have considerable funding to cover much if not all of this work. ME is happy to continue as the EBCC liaison for this project although of course involvement from other board members is welcome.

### **Butterfly Conservation Europe**

There has been some correspondence between BCE and EBCC over recent months. AK attended BCE's annual conference and subsequently ME has talked to Martin Warren, BCE's Development Officer. We agreed that it would be beneficial to maintain good links between the two organisations, and seek opportunities to work together. EBCC are considerably way further on than BCE in terms of development, and so they have more to learn from us than vice versa, but both sides would benefit from working together. At the moment there are no firm plans or commitments but certainly potential opportunities for research.

## **11. Report from EBCC Delegates Officer**

The EBCC website has been updated with a shortened list of delegates (just name and email) which is much more compliant with GDPR. We discussed if delegates do nothing, how do we identify those who do not respond, and how do we want to proceed. There is an opportunity for communication with delegates around Covid-19, and to ask if they are still interested in being a delegate.

**59-7 AP: Suggest alternative delegate in those countries where delegates are no longer interested in continuing (All)**

Recommendations should come from organisations and schemes in the country. EBCC could write to groups of people to ask for recommendations.

#### **59-8 AP: Create a group for delegates for EBCC Newsletter and send a pdf (HH)**

#### **12. Financial update for 2020**

CvT presented the financial update. There is 31,000€ in capital. The income of 25,000€ from data charges was noteworthy. Looking at the budget proposal for 2020, there are 5000€ for data charges. AL said another 5000€ will come from data changes later in the year. Website design will be c3,000€ in 2020, and the website domain is 98€. There is potentially 20,000€ to support EBBA2 or PECBMS, or EBBA2 final event. We agreed to not make any decisions on the 20,000€ now.

#### **Wednesday 22 April (09:00–c.15:00)**

#### **13. Atlas Steering Committee**

VK chaired the meeting, and we welcomed LB, RF, PV and SH.

All the material is now at Lynx, and Lynx have been impressed with the way the material has been presented and are confident they can work on the text and produce the book on time. Impacts of Covid-19 are unknown at this stage, but we hope to publish in November. We expect proofs through in early July. The brochure is no longer planned for spring 2020 due to restrictions in travel and dissemination. We need to coordinate with BirdLife over key messages to use from EBBA2 and BirdLife products so there is no contradiction. We agreed it was useful to produce a pdf for circulation but paper versions are really important if you want to give to MEPs etc.

#### **59-9 AP: Small group to take forward the idea of brochure and key messages (VK, PV, ME, IR)**

Possibilities for the final event are being discussed but Covid-19 means it is difficult to make plans at this time. Barcelona Zoo are interested and SH will continue to work with them over a possible final event in December 2020 or spring 2021. We also need to consider possibilities for remote presentation, or having a small number at an event, and larger numbers online.

The key people we would be interested in reaching at a launch event would be national coordinators, data providers, coordination team, publishers, major supporters and donors, researchers, international policy people, key organisations, other taxa, IUCN, BirdLife etc. This is likely to be around 150 people.

The aims of the event are to celebrate the success of the book, thank everyone for all their hard work, provide interpretation of the results and facilitate development of monitoring in other countries. If we do use remote presentation, the audience can be much wider and for example, include species sponsors. Another idea is that national coordinators could organise small events in their own countries and share with their own volunteers.

There is scope to support the development of monitoring in other countries, but this would best be done in a separate workshop. There is also potential to hold a workshop on how to present and interpret EBBA2 results.

Lynx propose a short window of two-month promotion for pre-publication but EBCC would like a longer opportunity to promote.



The IUCN World conference is in January in Marseille and is another option for a launch event and would give access to a broad audience. The World Conservation Congress is a major event for nature conservation and the development of a new global framework for biodiversity. Programme is here: <https://www.iucncongress2020.org/programme>

As of 31 March 2020, funding has been secured (after covering all expenditure until March 2020) to finish the project (307,000€). The expenditure covered until March 2020 does not include covered costs at SOI (mainly staff costs since 2011, over 600,000€). Budgeted expenditure until end of 2021 (end of MAVA contract, online publication) amounts to 150,000€, including a minimum amount for the final event and a possible short brochure, excluding staff costs at SOI. Secured funding thus allows for the completion of the project, but will only cover a small amount of accumulated costs at SOI. The financial situation at SOI provides a “safety net” in case further fundraising activities (initiatives German and Dutch governments, species sponsorship and others) fail.

VK presented principles which will help decide who will get a free book:

- Each person gets only one book, irrespective of the number of roles (e.g. author, national coordinator, ASC member etc.)
- National coordinators: two books per country are estimated
- Members of ASC, board, SMOG: one book
- Organisations involved in coordination team: two books in addition to the personal copies
- Sponsors 500+ Euro: one book, large donors depending on the contracts (1–3 books).

The current estimate of numbers of books needed for the network and sponsors and the financial situation could allow us to be a bit more generous to authors and artists than originally planned:

- Artists: agreed when providing 10 illustrations: 33 artists. An additional 10 books are needed if all artists get one
- Species account authors: proposal: a free book for all authors providing 4 texts: 23 books (12 if limit is set to five texts).

Based on these principles the estimated number of books is close to the 300 books included in the 50,000€ payment to Lynx.

Species sponsorship will continue; it has now raised over 111,000€, and 28,000€ alone have been raised by DDA through its own portal. The Species Sponsorship has been advertised since Christmas with a focus on the 50,000€ we need to pay to Lynx for reducing the book price and for paying the books we provide “for free” to national coordinators, big sponsors and artists.

We discussed whether we would want to continue fundraising but we would need to be clear what the aims of fundraising were. There was general support for continuing fundraising for things like EBP, training programmes and also a potential small grant scheme.

#### **59-10 AP: Strategic thinking at the next Board meeting (All)**

MAVA funding is targeted at work to finish the book and to prepare the interactive online publication. Most of the work for the book has been finished and the funding for this used.

All account editors and authors have provided their work for free, as in-kind contributions. In the MAVA budget there was an amount earmarked for writing species accounts, because it was not sure at the time whether we would manage to find enough authors. 16,000€ have therefore not been used for funding external authors. This money could be used to cover costs for writing and editing at



SOI or for compensating authors from national atlas teams which are struggling to find funding for their national projects which were prepared or started in the context of EBBA2. In particular this concerns texts contributed by authors from the following countries:

- Russia provided c53 texts (plus provision of texts from Russian atlas) and funding is urgently needed to finish their national atlas.
- Bulgaria: c 10 texts. Started new national atlas this year, request for funding received, plan to publish an atlas.
- Ukraine: c 5 texts: Plans for publication of national atlas unclear.

Many texts were also contributed by authors from these former “MAVA” countries:

Armenia: c 21 texts (new NGO, situation unclear)

Turkey: c 15 texts. (currently no plans for further atlas work)

We discussed ideas for the interactive website, which is an important part of the MAVA sponsorship, and which should be launched by end 2021. Lynx have agreed to this timetable. We discussed what data we could present in the maps (distribution, abundance, change?) and whether there are additional data to present such as land-use and climate. We should think who the key users are and what data they will want to see – summary data or underlying data for a square? People would perhaps be interested in comparing their countries or areas of interest with the rest of Europe. Consider how much is presented on the interactive website, how much would be available to download and how secure the data are (can it be easily hacked?). Also consider making available maps that were not selected in the book for some species, and the possibility of showing PECBMS trends alongside maps, and maybe information from the new EURING migration atlas. We need to make it clear how to cite the maps. If you allow maps to be downloaded, could already have a watermark showing copyright EBCC. There are also technical issues to resolve such as where will the online atlas be hosted.

Examples of atlas data online:

<http://www.bto.org/mapstore>

[http://thamesandchilternbirdatlas.org.uk/index.php?option=com\\_tetradatlas&view=distributionmap&atlas\\_id\\_distributionmap=1&species\\_taxon=GJ](http://thamesandchilternbirdatlas.org.uk/index.php?option=com_tetradatlas&view=distributionmap&atlas_id_distributionmap=1&species_taxon=GJ)

<https://www.vogelwarte.ch/en/atlas/species>

<http://atlas3.lintuatlas.fi/english/>

<https://www.vogelatlas.nl/atlas/soorten?language=english>

Thank you to the Atlas Coordination team.

We discussed dissemination of the EBBA2 results. Webinars are also an option, also live-streaming (and saved for later use) using a combination of interviews, presentation of maps and audience participation. We can also create short clips that can be used on social media such as unwrapping the first atlas. Also short videos of species account authors explaining what surprised them while writing the species account, showing some of the maps and nice pictures/videos of the bird (most people will be more attracted with a focus on a species in particular).

There will be opportunities for presentations at national conferences and publications but also opportunities for local conferences (all Covid-19 dependent). Guidance on how much we can reveal in articles pre-publication would be useful. Can there be an agreed set of species maps.

**59-11 AP: Share species list that we are happy to use in pre-publication material (VK)**

**59-12 AP: Please inform VK of any conferences you speak at (All)**

#### **14. Discussion on EBBA2 research**

We discussed the timing of the availability of EBBA2 data. We agreed we need to have a clear statement on EBBA2 website to say when data will be available and we need to define the guidelines in relation to data access. We agreed that data will be released when the online maps are made available – agree what will be open access and what data will be available on a data request basis.

We discussed a data handling and processing fee. This could be a fixed data handling fee such as 50€ (e.g. used by IWC) or a percentage of a contract (e.g. 10%).

EBBA1 used a fixed fee. RF suggested a percentage of a contract could be difficult to get the information needed about the budget of a project. The situation with PECBMS is that if there is income on a project then 10% will go to EBCC but many projects have no income.

**59-13 AP: A small group will take discussions forward and define a data request policy (ME, GG, AL, PV)**

#### **15. EBCC Research Steering Group update**

AL explained that in Sempach we outlined guidelines for EBCC research and data requests and since then we have had two data requests and we followed the guidelines which was very useful.

We discussed how we can merge guidelines for EBCC projects so there is a uniform approach to handling data requests. AL explained that his experience of the data request process is quite slow, often waiting many months for a response from a EBCC member. AL suggested that data request emails go to more than one person. Should data requests for all EBCC projects go through the same route?

For PECBMS, Anna Gamero is responsible for the data requests. She sends a data request form asking about the data required and about the researcher. If considered a priority, she sends to all national coordinators and asks if they agree to the data request and also if they agree that the PECBMS coordinator deals with the data request. They use a shared document on the website so they can see which projects they have approved.

For EBP, a council of EBP makes decisions about the data request, so filters the requests before they are sent out to partners. Decisions based on four criteria. If partners do not reply, it will be assumed as a 'yes'. The four criteria are:

- 1) Compatibility with own EBP/EBCC developments. Data requests that may potentially interfere with the EBP/EBCC research and developments should be deemed incompatible.
- 2) Shared objectives. Use of the data should ideally fit within the objectives of EBP/ EBCC. In case of doubt the EBP Executive committee will consult the EBCC Board.
- 3) Geographical scope. Data requests should have a continental or large scale geographical scope. Requests at the national or subnational level will be directed to the corresponding EBP partners.
- 4) Leading institution. Data requests lead by or involving EBP/EBCC partners should be given priority.

GG suggested we try to find a common protocol across all three projects. AK was concerned about assuming a 'yes' from national coordinators if there is no reply because PECBMS do not have the

right to deliver data without permission. AK was concerned about only having one email address to receive data requests but J-YP explained that the email could go to more than one person (representatives of all three projects plus AL and another).

We suggested new pages on the website that cover:

- Description of metadata for each project (use a common structure) and a link to GBIF for EBBA1
- What data is available (open access and request only) and explain that some site level data may require permission from each country.
- Explain the process for data requests, timescale and making things more transparent
- Present terms and conditions

We need to ensure that all requests go through the central data request system, even requests made informally to individual EBCC contacts.

**59-14 AP: Agree on the format of the metadata (eg. <https://www.gbif.org/dataset/c3dcff9e-1620-4fe0-a2f4-fd4086599c27>) for each project (AK, SH, GG)**

**59-15 AP: Finalise the process moving forward (AL, ME, AK)**

Two additional projects with funding for EBCC have been received.

1) Damaris Zurell contacted EBCC and was interested in using EBBA2 data in her research and application. The topic was close to the idea that has been the planned for the first EBBA2 paper (in process) and after discussion among the RSG members we decided to ask Damaris to join the preparation of the first article. Damaris has kindly provided funds for EBCC in advance (c. 5,000€). CvT has processed the invoice.

2) AL received consortium funding for a project entitled "Diseases on Wings", which investigates microbes of birds and bats in West and North Europe and how these might spread as species are shifting their ranges. The leader of the consortium is Thomas Lilley (bat person) from the Finnish Museum of Natural History. Funding for the site level PECBMS data includes c. 5,000€. The project has just started, but there are some technical delays due to Covid-19. A post-doc will start in June and the data would be needed at some point in the autumn. A normal data request process will be completed.

Other funding proposals:

3) EBCC was involved with two Horizon 2020 proposals which are large consortiums. The Prague team was involved in one lead by Finnish Environmental Institute. LB and SH have been at least initially involved with another proposal in the same call. LB explained the consortium he was involved in was led by Henrique Pereira at IDiv (Leipzig Germany) and strongly linked to GEO BON development and aiming at showcasing data integration flows across taxa and data sources from Europe aiming at comparing top-down vs bottom up monitoring approaches. ICO-CREAF-CTFC are the partners in the proposal and lead one WP. Funding was not explicitly budgeted for EBCC but likely at least 5,000€ will be available if the proposal would be accepted.

4) AL is involved with Biodiversa application in the theme "Climate change and biodiversity". The consortium is led by Johan Ekroos from University of Lund and some funds are budgeted for EBCC for the data delivery.

We discussed the first EBBA2 research articles.

### *Colonisations – extinctions*

A small group of people (LB, AL, Stephen Willis, Pietro Milanesi, Alejandra Moran, Emma Marjakangas) met in Finland in January and over two and half days discussed the topic of the first research paper. It will be about what factors (including climate change) explain colonisations and extinctions between EBBA1 and EBBA2 and what traits explain species specific variation in difference between expected and observed range changes. Drafts of the study questions and hypotheses as well as trait data have been collated. Preliminary analyses are expected in the early May and other researchers will be more involved then. The plan is to have the paper published in high impact journal at the same time as the book will come out.

### *Methodological paper*

During the research meeting in Finland in January, on behalf of Thomas Sattler, Verena Keller and Sergi Herrando, Pietro Milanesi showed his presentation, regarding a methodological paper based on EBBA2 10k data, to the participants (LB, AL, Stephen Willis, Alejandra Moran and Emma Marjakangas). This paper will be about comparison of predictive accuracy of species distribution models carried out with different approaches (i.e. alternatively including or excluding detection probability and spatial autocorrelation). Preliminary analyses on 224 species (the same with 10k modelled maps in EBBA2 book) are ongoing. As agreed with SH, a list of active SMOG members that would be contacted once preliminary results would be ready is in preparation. The plan is to submit the resulting methodological paper in a high impact factor journal (e.g. *Methods in Ecology and Evolution*).

### **Other research ideas (including EBBA)**

AL has received very few suggestions of the research topics since the last board meeting. There would be a need for a specific one day or half a day research workshop within the RSG to take forward research priorities.

J-YP described a recent DG Environment tender which could have used EBBA1 and EBBA2 data in relation to farmland birds but the amount of money available was not sufficient to undertake the analyses required. Evolution of farmland birds between the two atlases would be the key area of analyses. LB explained that he is involved in a consortium who have put in a bid for that tender.

VK reminded us that we should focus on the real strength of EBBA2 which is that it covers the whole of Europe. Analyses of change would have to be more limited to EBBA1 coverage. ME talked about the plan to produce a Rosenberg type paper to look at bird numbers across Europe, being led by Fiona Burns within his team at the RSPB with the involvement of Richard Gregory.

### **16. Bird Census News update**

The latest issue is now out, and will be put on the EBCC website and promoted by Facebook and Twitter. We have already received two papers for the next issue – one from Russia about winter monitoring, and one on Goosanders in Switzerland. We need to advertise BCN and request more articles.

The conference proceedings from Evora are not yet published. There was a suggestion these could be published in BCN if it is unlikely that the proceeding will need to be produced.

### **59-16 AP: Contact Evora contacts to ask what is happening with proceeding and if publishing in BCN is an option (AL)**

AK proposed that BCN could be archived on the EBCC website. DEB suggested that Biodiversity Heritage Library is also an option.

**59-17 AP: Further investigate Biodiversity Heritage Library and how to get BCN loaded (DEB)**

**17. Next Board Meeting**

Options are video conference, a meeting in Namur or potentially hold off a little longer and have a meeting in Barcelona in December to link with a potential EBBA2 launch.

**18. Any Other Business**

DP gave an update on the Norwegian Bird ID (Noord University) and provided funds for some countries for support. It is now two years with no funds and it is losing momentum. The project has been a great success in eastern Europe, and helps build capacity in these countries. DP suggests that EBCC could support (but not support financially) which might help secure further funding.

**59-18 AP: Establish how effective the Bird ID project has been in increasing capacity for monitoring. Contact key countries to ask how many participants have translated into key volunteers (DP)**

Plans for AGM to be circulated to delegates. Date to be agreed with ME, DEB, CVT.

Dawn Balmer