

EBCC

European Bird Census Council



Draft minutes of 61st EBCC Board meeting

Date /Time: 19 April 2021 (1000-1300 and 1400-1700 CET) and 20 April 2021 (0930-1230 CET)

Venue: Virtual, by zoom

Present: Mark Eaton (Chair, ME), Verena Keller (Vice Chair, VK), Dawn Balmer (Secretary, DB), Chris van Turnhout (Treasurer, CvT), Aleksí Lehtikainen (AL), Mikhail Kalyakin (MK), Henning Heldbjerg (HH), 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)

Monday 19 April (1000-1300 and 1400-1700 CET)

1. Welcome and adoption of agenda

ME welcomed everyone to the meeting; some readjustments were made to the agenda to suit attendee availability.

2. Minutes and Actions of 60th EBCC Board meeting

The Minutes from the 60th Board meeting were accepted and action points are covered below.

3. Plans for AGM

Three presentations and the AGM are planned for 20 April. We agreed we would use Microsoft Teams for the larger capacity. The Chairman's report will be compiled and ME will give a verbal presentation, the Financial report will be presented by CvT and the Delegates report presented by HH. ME will report on the next Bird Numbers conference.

4. Report from EBCC Delegates Officer (HH)

New delegates during the last year

Norway - John Atle Kålås, Norwegian Institute for Nature Research - NINA

Portugal - Carlos Godinho, LABOR - Laboratory of Ornithology, Dept. of Biology and ICAAM

Portugal - Hany Alonso, SPEA

Iceland - Gunnar Thor Hallgrímsson, University of Iceland

Iceland -Yann Kolbeinnsson, Northeast Iceland Nature Research Centre

Vacant positions

Six countries have only one delegate: Albania, Azerbaijan, Liechtenstein, Portugal, Serbia, Georgia. We suggested that in the AGM it would be worth encouraging these countries to think about a second delegate.

41 countries have two delegates. The Board expressed thanks to the departing delegates.

There has been interest from Robin Snape, the Turkish Cypriot bird conservation NGO KUŞKOR, to be a potential third delegate applicant for the island of Cyprus. We agreed that we want only two delegates, and we encourage collaboration with existing delegates, and of course we strongly encourage collaboration with the EBCC network regardless of delegate status.

5. EBBA2 update

VK informed us that sales information from Lynx told us the second print run was used up in February and the third (and last) reprint should be available in late April. A total of 7,265 books have been printed (first print 2,523, second print 3,942 and third print 800) and 6,575 books have been sold. The countries with the largest sales are Switzerland and Germany (over 1,000 books), followed by the Netherlands and UK.

Lynx are stopping production of all new books but will keep a small staff for selling existing books [Update: Two members of the Lynx team—Yolanda Aguayo, Financial Director, and Amy Chernasky, Editorial Coordinator—have started a new company, Alada, that will take charge of the commercialization of all current Lynx publications and will continue to develop new projects]. Communication with Lynx has been quite difficult recently and SH is the main contact for EBCC communication with Lynx. If Lynx stop reprinting, the rights go to EBCC and we can discuss what to do about future reproduction e.g. digital options.

Book reviews are now appearing in the press. PV encourages the Board to share reviews in the Google Doc

(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gaoltdmFW3LU4hoCriz0yMD9t_E57EP0zTH1gytDVql/edit?usp=sharing)

Work on the Online version is progressing, and comments have been taken on board from EBBA Steering Committee. A new version of the specification is now available; work will start in May and will hopefully be finished by the end of the year. We will incorporate some EBBA2 material from the existing website into the new website.

EBBA2 50-km occurrence maps have already been published in the Russian atlas, as agreed with Lynx beforehand. Since the publication of the book there has been a similar request by ICO to publish the European occurrence maps in the Catalan atlas, also granted; this is scheduled for publication in autumn 2021. The EBBA2 coordination team proposes a general solution for our network, to allow the use of these maps in bird atlases to complement national or regional maps. Occurrence data will be open access on the web once the EBBA2 online version is launched at the end of 2021 but there may still be a demand for providing the actual maps. The proposal is that we proactively inform the network that they can use 50x50 occurrence maps in the atlases (not breeding evidence or modelled maps). These maps can provide a general European context in the country atlases.

61-1 AP: Inform network that 50x50 occurrence maps can be used in atlases (EBBA2 team).

DP raised the question of updating global maps to update the European distribution maps; there has already been contact with BirdLife International to start a discussion. AS is discussing internally at BirdLife International with Ian Burfield. There is the potential to work with Collins Bird Guide to update its distribution maps (e.g. in the app version) and it was agreed to investigate this.

61-2 AP: Share contact information for Collins Bird Guide with the EBBA2 team (DEB).

6. Discussion on EBBA2 research

The first paper with Steve Willis/Lluís Brotons is nearing completion; the paper explains the colonisations and extinctions of species. AL's Research Group is leading on a paper looking at how fast communities are changing in the 50x50 grid cells and expects a first draft by the summer. Working with BirdLife International on population estimates and how these can be explored and combined with existing work. The plan is to produce a paper and a best practice guide. Work is on hold until the European Red List is finished.

Work on distribution changes in Eastern Europe, led by MK, is progressing. A short project draft has been circulated; need a formal criterion for assessing change. Need to contact Ukraine and Belarus to establish contacts for the project. The work will primarily use EBBA2 data but potentially data from other sources; we recognise that there are no changes since EBBA1 available. This project would need some funding to progress; MK has suggested €5000 would cover part-time work but additional funding may be needed for Ukraine and Belarus. We need to be clear what other requests for funding may come in, for example for Serbia. We can identify a process for making decisions, perhaps with small group from the Board (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer).

7. EBCC Research Steering Group update (AL, ME)

Concerning future research opportunities, there are several potentially interesting Horizon 2020 calls coming, where EBCC could have a role. Upcoming calls may be useful for EBCC, but not in a capacity to lead (see <http://alter-net.info/about-alter-net/members/call-exchange>).

We need to find ways to get into the bids as we expect consortiums are currently being formed. There are a large number of groups tendering for these projects. We discussed how we find a relevant consortium. We can go to the platform and express interest in a project, though usually consortiums are often formed by the time they reach this stage. Personal contacts are best.

61-3 AP: One hour meeting of the Research Group to brainstorm ideas (AL).

New Biodiversity Strategy – EBBA2 data could be used to model proposed protection areas. Linked to BirdLife paper that AS prepared.

Two day meeting on EuropaBON at the end of May is planned; LB is involved, chairing one session in which ME will present on the EBCC's role in data provision, with BirdLife then presenting on the policy-relevant use of monitoring data. There is a good opportunity for EBCC with this project, but some of the aims of EuropaBON still remain unclear. SH updated on plans to collate information on monitoring programmes across Europe.

61-4 AP: Follow-up on communication with the Commission (ME).

8. Data request process

The work to develop a strategy to deal with the EBBA2 requests was explained. A form is currently being used and everyone who had expressed interest in the data has been contacted and sent the form, and five data requests have been received. A meeting was held in early April to discuss these five requests. We have replied positively in all cases; three were requests for specific species, one for modelled data (modelled outcomes for bird species and variables) and one to analyse changes in several taxa across Europe. No data handling requests were applied, though one has included a contribution of €10,000 included in its funding proposal.

The hope is to learn from the EBBA2 process, and then work further with EBP and PECBMS to produce a common data request process.

9. PECBMS progress report

AK thanked the PECBMS team for all their hard work. Many team members have been affected by Covid, and also dealing with the challenges of working from home. The EC funding will continue till the end of 2022, and RSPB work secures Anna Gamero's position.

In 2021, the team have been requesting 2019 and 2020 data and have also asked for a separate table with more detailed information on the data which will give a better knowledge of the dataset. There have been many technological developments and improvements to data flow and analyses. This has included updating bird names (to HBW/BirdLife nomenclature), requested new EURING codes, improving RTRIM-shell and RSWAN, data control on a national level, updated the online tool for data upload, database transformation from Access to R and providing a new RTRIM-shell tutorial.

The website has been updated with eight new articles added, updates on the publications, methods and contacts section, links updated throughout and the PECBMS report added.

PECBMS results have been promoted through the EBCC Facebook page (33 news items since 1 December) and the EBCC Newsletter (winter and spring issues).

PECBMS data paper in Scientific Data on 'Long-term and large-scale multispecies dataset tracking population changes of common European breeding birds' was published in late March (Brlík et al 2021). The journal asked for all the raw data to be published at very short notice; thanks to the team and national coordinators. The database containing supra-national and national population indices is available at the Zenodo repository.

Ongoing research includes EU population change analysis (Fiona Burns, Richard Gregory & ME, RSPB) and an assessment of relative habitat use as a metric of species habitat association and specialisation (Enya O'Reilly, Simon Butler, University of East Anglia). Also involved in the Turtle Dove migration project, a proposal for the delineation of flyways (Office Français de la Biodiversité and Instituto de Investigación en Recursos Cinegéticos). PECBMS data have also been used in Maggini et al (2021) in *Ecology and Evolution* and Morrison et al (2021) in *Proc. R. Soc. B*.

The PECBMS team have maintained good communication with the Network. There have been regular meetings with Serbia who are having a pilot year using International Census plots (see below). A PECBMS webinar was held on 30 March dedicated to RTRIM Shell and was attended by over 40 participants. A new communication forum has been set up in Slack (pecbms.slack.com) to help share experiences within the Network.

Work has also focused on reporting to the main stakeholders, and on administration with meetings with the Tender Steering Committee (December 2020) and PECBMS Steering and Technical Group (March 2021). At the December 2020 discussed the needs of policy; keen to receive disaggregated data on a regional level and asking for quicker process of updates (which is not possible right now) and to explore indicator for other habitats, especially for urban bird indicator.

AL has updated the mountain bird indicators 2002–14 with six more years added. Overall there was negative change, and now with six years data have a slight increase – still a slight negative trend in the UK. The main source of the data is mainly BBS data with some additional specific data. SH commented the mountain indicator is made for a region in Europe and is also methodically important. Good to share experience from AL to help discussions around urban bird indicator – what are urban birds? Use counts from birds in cities, so a habitat focus to data collection rather than species focus?

61-5 AP: Arrange a meeting with AL and AK (and others) to discuss sharing experience around indicators.

AL shared his experience of using online tools to connect with monitoring volunteers. JYP also commented on webinars across Europe; good idea to record and share on YouTube. We talked about compiling the webinars from other countries and making the links available through the EBCC website

Finland: <https://www.birdlife.fi/suojelu/seuranta/valtakunnallinen/lintulaskentakurssi2021/>

Netherlands: [Sovon Vogelonderzoek Nederland - YouTube](#)

ICO, Spain: [7a Jornada del SOCC: Sessió de tarda - YouTube](#)

Belgium: [Webinaires - YouTube](#)

France: [Webinaire Suivi des Oiseaux Communs 8-9 mars 2021 \(rediffusion\) - YouTube](#)

UK: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BTOvideo/videos>

10. International Census Plots

We discussed the concept of International Census Plots at the previous meeting and PV explained that they had continued to work with Serbian colleagues with the pilot scheme in Serbia; they started fieldwork and expect around 30 plots to be surveyed this year. A short document proposing the use of ICP's for monitoring Turtle Dove for the purpose of the species action plan in eastern flyway of the species has been developed. Plan to provide the document to the Commission and propose it as a project.

PV will draw up a contract between EBCC and the society in Serbia (budget received from Serbia €3000). A follow-up meeting in early May will be held to see what progress has been made.

Countries will have their own databases but these must be compatible and able to produce analyses and outputs. Serbia will use 2x2 squares within circles (10, 20, 30km radius).

There is a lack of monitoring data on Turtle Dove in eastern flyway. International Census Plots could be offered as a tool to countries in the Eastern Flyway to bring in the data needed for the Turtle Dove work. A workshop will be held on 10 May on adaptive harvest of Turtle Doves in the eastern flyway. It is important to circulate the document quickly so the workshop are aware of the potential monitoring schemes.

61-6 AP: Discussion in autumn about what we want to achieve with International Census Plots (all).

SH discussed the idea of having updated information on the distribution of Turtle Dove as a pilot for the living atlas of farmland bird idea. GG suggested using EBP data too, compared with Atlas data.

PV is hoping for support from the Commission for the Turtle Dove work; it is in the general interest of the EU, and to have data from non-EU countries. Potential for support from EBCC small grants if funding from the Commission fails.

We discussed whether any of the decisions that have made around Serbia have consequences for other countries. Line transects have been adopted in Serbia and PV is confident that other countries will adopt line transects rather than point counts. Sampling should be transferable. Long discussion around what to record for species; Serbia keen to use atlas species codes and these are easily transferable to categories. What is the sustainability for Serbia? PV said they have applied to Rufford Foundation for Turtle Dove work and should know the outcome in early May. They are quite active seeking other funds too. Agreed it will be important to get feedback on the projects in a timely way, which will be important for giving feedback to donors.

11. Financial update for 2020/21 (CVT)

We have received €7000 from data charges and there were no expenses for board meetings so the financial situation is very healthy. As of 15/04/2021 we have €41,790.40 in our bank account; €7,172 of which is funding for Anna Gamero's work, so will leave a balance of €34,718. We have enough budget to potentially support good initiatives. CVT suggested at present €20,000 could be used for supporting projects, and there was general agreement on this sum. VK suggested that royalties and data charges related to EBBA2 should be kept as different lines in the budget. We might want to have specific uses of the money raised through royalties e.g. a travel fund for the next conference.

It was asked what level of resource do we wish to maintain for the future? Generally, expenses are quite small (€1500-1700 a year), plus website hosting fee and bank charges. Some years there has been no income, so it is important to keep a buffer in reserve to cover standard operating costs. EBBA2 data requests may bring in €10,000 in the next financial year, and VK suggested that royalties may be as much as €20-30,000 but perhaps not all in the next financial year.

12. Small grant fund (VK)

In the past, EBCC have provided emergency funding to support schemes that have run into trouble. VK previously proposed the idea of a Small Grant Fund and this was supported by EBCC Board. A more concrete proposal has been circulated for discussion.

The aim is to support national monitoring schemes, perhaps providing start up funding for new monitoring schemes, emergency funding, support for national atlases, start up funding for online tools, capacity building etc. We need to produce principles for selecting suitable schemes. Grants should be limited in time. Recipients should also seek their own funding to secure the project in the long term. We should consider the funding sources for the small grants e.g. individual donations, appeals via the website, run a campaign to support fieldwork in a specific country, income from handling data requests. We should discuss how such funds would be handled by EBCC. Also consider contributions from partner organisations to core EBCC work, like contributions to EURING.

JYP asked whether grants should be for co-funded projects only. VK responded that for many pilot projects there is no co-funding available. ME suggested principles around sustainability are needed. Transparency about criteria and decision making. PV suggested we keep the administration as little as possible. AL suggested reporting on progress could be published in BCN. CVT said it would be important to communicate the maximum funding available for any specific project.

SN reported that the Wetlands International Waterbird Fund is not promoted widely; funding is for quite small amounts and try not to create a dependency for funding. They don't issue a call for projects. Funding has been received from individuals ranging from those giving a small amount of euros to a few thousand.

It is important there is minimal administration. Share experience from EBBA2 Species sponsorship on how to transfer funds (bank transfers, not everyone has a credit card). VK suggests it should be run by a country with euro as their currency. CVT doesn't see an issue with running a small grants fund from with the current bank account and structure; money can be identified as belonging to a specific fund. The current bank account enables bank transfers and CVT thinks that credit card payment should be possible. Under Dutch law, EBCC don't pay tax on donations. But should check whether the donations need to be declared.

AP61-7 Check whether credit card payments are possible within our bank account, and check if donations need to be declared (CVT)

Next steps are to develop the criteria for assessing funding applications, and think about how we actually communicate about the fund on our website. It was agreed that we could mention the idea at the AGM on 20 April, though need to manage expectations and perhaps suggest the fund could be up and running by the end of the year. AK suggested we need to promote the need for donations too.

AP61-8 Promote the small grants fund at the AGM (ME)

DP suggested creating a list of organisations which we work with, which could be a useful source of potential recipients. Potential ideas discussed: International Census Plots (eg Serbia), the eastern European atlas analysis, providing travel funds for 2022 conference participants from low-income countries.

Tuesday 10 April (0930-1230 CET)

1. Euro Bird Portal report

GG told us that Iceland have joined EBP in 2021, they are using eBird and the data flow has been established immediately. Lithuania and Russia have joined but the data flow is not at EBCC standard. EBP is working with nineteen different online systems. Some countries submit data from two portals e.g. Greece use BirdTrack and eBird. 99% of the data flow is automatic, the remainder is manual. There is an increasing amount of data coming in as complete lists.

Over the 2010–2020 period 389,092,402 records were submitted, of which 75.1% were in the form of casual records and 21.9% were complete lists – the latter proportion is increasing. In 2020, 56,427,546 records were submitted, of which 65.6% were casual records and 31.9% were complete lists. There were some interesting effects of Covid-19; an increase in data submission and more urban data. Fourteen ‘project types’ are recorded, with Migration count contributing 3,880,835 records, common breeding bird surveys 3,678,897 records and winter waterbird counts 3,055,083 records.

The total amount of data has been increasing since 2016, especially from Portugal, Spain and France. There are still gaps in eastern Europe. Need to collect more complete lists everywhere. The priority is to engage Norway, Sweden and Finland in collection of complete lists; Sweden have started complete lists and hope to submit soon.

The work for EFSA is continuing under two contracts:

- 50 species of interest have been identified (list below), of which 18 were already covered by EBP, the other 32 will be added.
- provide an aggregated dataset for geographical area in Europe, info on number of observers.

The Migration Mapping tool combines data from EURING and observational data from EBP. The aim is for 50 species to have the best data on connectivity and distribution in Europe for the 50 species, with a summary of the average count each week in each 50 x 50 square for 5 years of data. They hope to have the work complete by July, and are talking with EFSA about a follow-up contract to do more work on Avian Influenza, using connectivity data and observational data for early warning system in real time.

EFSA avian influenza surveillance 50 bird species targets

English name	Latin name	English name	Latin name
Mute Swan	<i>Cygnus olor</i>	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>
Black Swan	<i>Cygnus atratus</i>	Great Crested Grebe	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>
Whooper Swan	<i>Cygnus cygnus</i>	Black-necked Grebe	<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>
Bean Goose	<i>Anser fabalis</i>	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>
Pink-footed Goose	<i>Anser brachyrhynchus</i>	Great White Pelican	<i>Pelecanus oncorhynchos</i>
Greater White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser albifrons</i>	Dalmatian Pelican	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>
Lesser White-fronted Goose	<i>Anser erythropus</i>	Eurasian Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellatus</i>
Greylag Goose	<i>Anser anser</i>	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>
Canada Goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Great White Egret	<i>Ardea alba</i>
Brent Goose	<i>Branta bernicla</i>	Grey Heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
Egyptian Goose	<i>Alopochen aegyptiaca</i>	White Stork	<i>Ciconia ciconia</i>
Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>	White-tailed Sea-eagle	<i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i>
Eurasian Wigeon	<i>Mareca penelope</i>	Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
Common Teal	<i>Anas crecca</i>	Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Rough-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>
Northern Pintail	<i>Anas acuta</i>	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Gadwall	<i>Anas strepera</i>	Purple Swamphen	<i>Porphyrio porphyrio</i>
Red-crested Pochard	<i>Nettion rufina</i>	Green Sandpiper	<i>Tringa ochropus</i>
Common Pochard	<i>Aythya ferina</i>	Black-headed Gull	<i>Larus ridibundus</i>
Tufted Duck	<i>Aythya fuligula</i>	New Gull	<i>Larus canus</i>
Greater Scaup	<i>Aythya marila</i>	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>
Common Eider	<i>Somateria mollissima</i>	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>
Common Goldeneye	<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Eurasian Eagle-owl	<i>Bubo bubo</i>
Snow	<i>Mergus albellus</i>	Piedbiller	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>
Goosander	<i>Mergus mergamus</i>	Eurasian Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>

● Already available in the EBP viewer

EFSA want a single tool for them and member states to check for best information on species across Europe. In the future, potential to add in waterbird species.

The primary data for each country is that received via the main country portal. EBP are aware there are secondary portals in many countries. At the moment the EBP partner says which dataset to use. EBP will summarise data collected from global portals e.g. ebird, Ornitho for each country, and will circulate to each country contact, so they can decide whether the secondary data portal data should be used.

Some worldwide portals may collect data for countries that are not year EBP partners e.g. Serbia. GG is working with these countries to improve the quality of data and to use a portal that already exists.

Logo	Online portal	Countries providing data	Submission mode	Total number of records submitted	% in lists	% of records submitted by year (2010-2020)
	Artportalen	Sweden	Automatic	33,833,817	<div><div></div></div>	
	Artsobservasjoner	Norway	Automatic	11,844,559	<div><div></div></div>	
	Atlas ptic	Slovenia	Manual	277,921	<div><div></div></div>	
	Aves-Symfony	Slovakia	Automatic	1,316,266	<div><div></div></div>	
	Birds.cz	Czech Republic	Automatic	4,204,756	<div><div></div></div>	
	BirdTrack	Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Spain, UK	Automatic	56,799,597	<div><div></div></div>	
	Dabas Dati	Latvia	Automatic	2,417,075	<div><div></div></div>	
	DOFbasen	Denmark	Automatic	10,467,675	<div><div></div></div>	
	eBird	Greece, Iceland, Israel, Portugal, Spain, Turkey	Automatic	20,366,558	<div><div></div></div>	
	MAP	Hungary	Manual	1,114,700	<div><div></div></div>	
	Observation	Belgium, Netherlands, Spain	Automatic	47,683,847	<div><div></div></div>	
	OpenBirdMaps	Romania	Automatic	559,568	<div><div></div></div>	
	Ornitho	Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Poland, Spain, Switzerland	Automatic	169,842,713	<div><div></div></div>	
	OrnithoData	Romania	Manual	325,712	<div><div></div></div>	
	PlutoF	Estonia	Automatic	578,993	<div><div></div></div>	
	SmartBirds	Bulgaria	Manual	814,283	<div><div></div></div>	
	Sovon Live Atlas	Netherlands	Automatic	7,979,748	<div><div></div></div>	
	Tiira	Finland	Automatic	11,130,171	<div><div></div></div>	
	Trekellen	Belgium, Netherlands	Automatic	4,164,313	<div><div></div></div>	

2. News from BirdLife International

IR is leaving BirdLife International and will be working on the Convention on Migratory Species work for United Nations from 1 June. BirdLife International have recently recruited Martin Harper as new Head of Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia. AS will be the main contact for EBCC. The European Red List is planned to be published by the end of June, with the updated list online and the production of a glossy leaflet, with an online event and social media campaign planned. The IUCN Status update will not be available until Sept/Oct. BirdLife International are looking for financial support to publish a new Birds in Europe (4th edition), update SPEC assessments etc hopefully starting in July and completed by October.

Wildlife Comeback Report manuscript - working with EBCC. ME added that progress remains slow, contracts not yet signed. Conversations with ZSL regarding analysis are ongoing. Looking at publication in autumn 2022. Horizon project - bid has been submitted; wait till the autumn to hear. Budget work is ongoing, identifying priorities in Europe e.g. threats to species in Europe.

EBCC expressed thanks to IR for all his contributions to EBCC.

3. News from Wetland International

SN updated us that Wetland International are working on drafting a site monitoring framework for AEWA with BL and SOVON. The report is in draft form and going to AEWA committee for review. Also producing another report on monitoring priorities for AEWA, come up with a proposal for a staggered cycle of international surveys, mostly on non-breeding birds and African breeding birds. Priority classes include species that have a AEWA management plan, globally threatened species with no AEWA or action plan, also low-hanging fruits – monitoring in one season but not the other (e.g. Iceland would be encouraged to do some breeding bird monitoring) and where monitoring could be based on multi-species monitoring schemes.

4. Update on communications

There have been four regular issues of EBCC newsletter and one special issue regarding EBBA2 in the last year. There are more than 600 contacts, and the number of subscribers is increasing. The open rate of the newsletter is more than 50%, which is good, and c25% click on items in the newsletter. The newsletter is found at the footer at EBCC website, together with an archive.

The new EBCC profile on Facebook has only 445 followers; it published 30 posts from December 2020 to April 2021. The most successful post was launch of the Russian Atlas – more than 7,000 people received the news! EBBA2 is still on Facebook and has 3,239 followers. The new EBCC website is going well with seven articles uploaded since December, and the list of delegates updated. AK suggested short videos about some of our projects such as PECBMS and EBP would be good for social media. What is the purpose of the video – what is the message we want to get across? We also have the EBCC YouTube channel – PV, GG and AK have access to the channel. AL suggested we make some videos of fieldwork this season. GG said that in Catalonia they had a staff 'TV show' during lockdown, and now they are on the TV every two weeks, promoting birds and surveys. They will be using drones to take footage of bird surveyors this spring. HH suggested that we ask PECBMS coordinators to promote to local surveyors. PV commented that a training video on how to do an International Census Plot would be useful. JYP raised the question about how can our science stories reach the fieldworkers? Can we use videos to simply explain the story and how the data has been used?

AP61-9: Take photos and short videos during this field season that will be useful (All)

AP61-10: Prepare a short proposal on how videos can be used (AK)

Mixed views of how much volunteers want to hear how their data is used within their country, and also in Europe.

5. Bird Census News update

2020 Volume was published early this year. The first issue of 2021 contains two papers waiting for language check (Roost counts in the Netherlands, interview of Sergi), one paper to be resubmitted soon (Corn Crakes in Armenia), two more papers needed (one interview and one survey online tool). Suggestions from PV on Czech Republic scheme, GG to ask Ornitho, DEB to enquire about BirdTrack; deadline mid May 2021.

The second issue of 2021 - no papers ready yet. Themes suggested are i) covid and survey activity, ii) monitoring schemes of colonial waterbirds (national schemes), iii) non-bird biodiversity information collected during BBS (incl. e.g. mammals) and 1–2 more interviews and 1–2 online tool articles, volunteers. Deadline end of October. DP suggested a paper on how useful BirdID has been in countries. AK can work with PECBMS team to prepare a questionnaire on other taxa recorded and perhaps other questions too. ME suggested we ask Butterfly Conservation in the UK to write about

UKBMS. Interviews could be added to Board page on the website and also relevant ones to the EBBA2 website.

AP61-11: Ask Ian Woodward to write about Heronries Census (DEB), prepare a questionnaire about collecting data on other taxa (AK), contact UKBMS about an article (ME).

Regarding the archiving system, ME and DP have been scanning old volumes into pdf; the quality is adequate. AL contacted Biodiversity Heritage Library confirming that EBCC accepts the copyright issues in March, and last week, though no reply so far. BHL sounded very interested earlier last winter.

6. EBCC conference 2022 'Beyond the atlas: challenges and opportunities'

The website is live and will be updated in due course. Potential conference delegates will need to create an account and everything will be managed through the account e.g. submitting abstracts, payment. There is potential to have cheaper accommodation at the Army training centre (3–5 people sharing with shared facilities) but the booking would need to be a bulk booking through the organising committee.

We agreed on 15 minute time slots for talks which will give us about 80 talks. Five plenary talks of 40 minutes (VK on EBBA2, Juliet Vickery on human diversity in bird monitoring, Alexander Mischenko on ecological view from the East, Thomas Sattler on overview of bird monitoring in Switzerland and Martin Warren on butterfly monitoring in Europe). The conference will start on a Tuesday. One Monday evening plan is a get-together. There will be a poster session (with boards). We also need to consider speed talk sessions. Deadline for the submission of abstracts is 15 September 2021. Plan to announce plenary speakers towards the end of April, also reminders to please submit proposals.

Briefly discussed the option of having virtual talks. We would try to encourage as many people as possible to attend. It may be possible to record the talks, especially the plenaries. Organising a proper hybrid conference is a huge amount of work, and beyond that of the local organising committee.

AP61-12: Provide a timeline of when we plan to make announcements about the conference and critical dates for making decisions (VK, Conference organising committee).

7. Standing update on future Board roles and composition

We expect VK to retire from the Board in 2022.

8. Any Other Business

Slow progress with proceedings from the Evora conference.

MK proposed he sends a questionnaire to the Board about motivation of volunteers as there are big differences between the East and West.

DP explained BirdID remains important in Eastern Europe and proposed that national organisers write a proposal for funding and suggested that EBCC could support the proposal. Consider educational funding sources, charitable trusts, citizen science funding sources.

9. Next meeting

Suggest an interim meeting in July and decide what is possible for an autumn meeting.

Dawn Balmer, Secretary