

## Minutes of 62nd EBCC Board meeting

### Date /Time:

8 November 2021 (0930-1200 and 1330-1530 CET)

9 November 2021 (0930-1200 and 1330-1530 CET)

**Venue:** Virtual

**Present:** Mark Eaton (Chair, ME), Verena Keller (Vice Chair, VK), Dawn Balmer (Secretary, DB), Chris van Turnhout (Treasurer, CvT), Aleksi Lehikoinen (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). Lluís Brotons (LB) joined for the morning of the 9 November.

### Monday 8 November

#### 1. Welcome and adoption of agenda

ME welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Verena for kindly offering to Chair the meeting in the event ME wasn't well enough to do so.

#### 2. Minutes and Actions of 61st EBCC Board meeting

Action points are covered under each agenda point.

#### 3. EBCC conference 2022

VK provided an update on the EBCC conference. The website has been updated to include registration and excursions and participants are being encouraged to create an account. So far 82 people have registered: 64 regular, two students, 15 from low/middle income countries. Eleven people have asked for financial support, 12 asked for a place in the army accommodation. A reasonably priced restaurant for the evening dinner has been found. Additional workshops have been organised. The next task is to think about travel support for the conference and workshops, and need to add info on Covid-19 restrictions to the website. The Local Organising Committee are working on the assumption that the conference will go ahead as planned. People with Covid-19 certificates are currently allowed to enter Switzerland; a Covid vaccine certificate will be required to enter the conference venue (exemptions permitted?). Currently the Sputnik vaccine used in Russia and elsewhere e.g. Serbia, is not accepted in Switzerland, but hopefully this situation will change - we discussed the possibility of exemptions for the Russians but VK thinks the cases will be borderline. MK asked if Dr Alexander Mischenko could present his lecture online if need be. Currently the conference venue is flexible regarding Covid-19 and financial commitments. Agreed that we will take a decision in January whether the conference can take place in person.

62–1 AP: Take a decision in January regarding whether the conference will be in-person or virtual (All)

The Scientific Programme Committee met on 5 November. 106 submissions have been received for oral presentations and the number of timeslots available is 82. Nine people on the SPC assessed the abstracts independently and at the meeting we classed each as 'accepted for oral', 'accepted as poster' and 'maybe/comments'. So far 77 have been accepted for oral presentations, 16 accepted as poster. We suggest three could be integrated with EBBA2 workshop but still need to discuss with EBBA2 team. Ten abstracts still in the balance but will be informed soon as we start to plan the programme. There is a good spread of talks across subjects.

Looking at gender balance, 26.4% of submissions for oral presentations and 25.9% of accepted presentations are from women. We felt that talks are representative of the whole EBCC community. We managed to accept an oral presentation from almost every country! We plan to communicate to those who submitted proposals for talks by mid-November. The PECBMS agenda is already planned (three hours). AK will consider the addition of an extra talk. For EBBA2 the talks are the Bulgaria and Basque atlases. AS asked if there could be a workshop on the application of results in policy and VK said that there are already evening workshops on three evenings, though there could be a parallel session. There is always overlap with delegates involved in more than one workshop. AS will consider making a proposal regarding a workshop. JYP will look at parallel sessions and try to make them work e.g. placing technical talks against capacity building talks. We need to get a provisional programme online by the end of November.

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

HH reported that there had been very little communication with the delegates since the last meeting. Robin Snape from Cyprus has emailed again regarding a third delegate from Cyprus. Our constitution allows for two delegates only, but delegate status shouldn't make any difference to level of engagement with EBCC. We have previously suggested that one of the existing Cypriot delegates steps down to allow for a North Cyprus delegate. VK reminded us that we wrote to the Cyprus delegates in the past and that the BirdLife and Game and Fauna Service positions are important and raised the question of an observer type role for a delegate. PV suggested we try to engage with them through projects such as PECBMS and EBP. GG says that Robin Snape contacted EBP in 2018/19 regarding using eBird in the north and there was communication for a while, but no further communication in recent years. We suggest North Cyprus talks to BirdLife Cyprus – they collaborate when they want to. DP suggests we do not make any changes to our constitution as it would be seen as a political stance. Find out if the delegate from the Game and Fauna Service is still keen and active and wonders if the BirdLife and KUŞKOR would be the most appropriate delegates. AS supports DP and suggests we encourage them to talk to the BirdLife and Game and Fauna Service delegates. HH asks what do they think they will gain by having delegate status? Really only voting at the AGM, though anyone can attend the AGM and take part in EBCC projects.

62–2 AP: ME to write to Robin Snape making the points above.

#### **5. Small grant fund**

PV circulated a paper outlining the objectives and procedure around the process for assessing applications to the SGF (keeping fundraising as a separate issue). Five simple criteria are listed for project selection. Each of the criteria will be assessed by scores: 0 = no compliance, 1 = complies, but with some doubts, 2 = perfect compliance. Score 0 in the criteria 1, 3 and 4 means the proposal is rejected. For practical reasons PV suggests that EBCC Board appoints a 'reviewer' to review the project, score and make a recommendation to the Board. This will reduce the workload of the Board. DP suggests we prioritise countries and project types and help countries in priority areas to submit. PECBMS and EBP would be priorities, however PV notes sensitivities around presenting this in a formal way. PV explained low and middle income countries are defined by the World Bank Group. SN says austerity measures can affect a monitoring project in other countries too. PV suggests that final decisions are made by the Board and hesitates to add further criteria at this stage (such as

weighting). VK says actually few countries fall into low and middle income countries. PV suggests we present the scheme at the conference; we'll have a better idea of funding available by then, and the communication will be prepared. ME suggests a draft proposal is made available by way of an example, perhaps using Serbia as an example. CvT would like some help with fundraising from PV and AK. Think about the targeting and promotion of the fund; do we promote to our own community or further afield? GG, AK and DP offered to help too. CvT will also contact Rewilding Europe for advice. PV says that Russia and other eastern European countries (Moldova) may require some funding in the next six months. MK says some Russian projects will need support before the scheme is formally launched. We will know more in spring from experience of the Moscow region submitting data to PECBMS. Working with Russian territories closer to Europe may be a priority. There may be limits on our capacity to support projects if we support the three countries (Serbia, Moldova and Russia) we are already committed to supporting. We will make a decision by the end of this year regarding level of funds. CvT asks how many years we might support Serbia? PV suggests long-term but that should be supporting them to find funds from other sources and not necessarily from the Small Grants Fund. SN reminded us of the long-term support needed for IWC projects and suggests thinking about exit strategies from long-term support. AS says we should showcase the work as much as possible to show extent of EBCC work and support of new monitoring scheme in Europe.

62-3 AP: Provide initial estimate of costs required for Russia (MK) and Moldova (PV) to help us make an informed decision.

## **6. EBBA2 update**

VK informed us that a reprint was available at the end of September, and now over 8000 have been printed with 7000 actually sold. Work is progressing well on Atlas Online in Barcelona. Atlas SC meeting on 26 November to discuss further. Plan to complete the online work by the end of December, and launch to the wider audience in January. GG supports the launch in January to ease pressure on work.

## **7. Proposal for new Secretariat**

ME outlined what the key tasks would be for the new Secretariat; these include organisation of meetings, communication jobs, leading on BCN, fundraising (SGF) and fundraising for its own existence, coordinate EBCC responses to research calls and be proactive in research opportunities and development of partnerships and contacts.

The size of the task is likely to be one person full time or equivalent. EBCC doesn't want to be an employer but believes it is better to work through a key partner. ME has approached CSO to discuss the potential opportunity to work with them. We discussed whether we should put a call out to offer the opportunity for other organisations to host. JYP supported that the organisation should be involved in another EBCC project but asks if ICO is also a possibility. GG and VK suggest not to make an open call and concentrate on the best option now, better working with people that we know and can deliver, and this was agreed with more widely. CSO raised questions around governance and how we manage risk e.g. PV mentioned change of government, potential change of CSO Board. PV also raised planning workload so that the role is not overloaded. ME says some of the tasks on the list are already being covered by CSO, so some tasks may need to be combined e.g. newsletter.

ME suggests four Board Officers (ME, VK, DB, CvT) work further with CSO to define the tasks, consider governance between EBCC and CSO, and work on costings. Need to think about how we can secure funding for this, be proactive and seek regular support from wealthier organisations in the network. SOI have secured 10,000 Swiss Francs for 2022, thanks to Thomas Sattler and VK. We should consider approaching larger BirdLife Partners, research organisations such as RSPB and make it clear that contributions of all sizes would be welcome. Engaging the delegates around the vision of

the new Secretariat will be important. VK said that CSO would cover costs of the infrastructure; that would be generous contribution from CSO.

62-4 AP: Back to Board by the end of the year with the proposal (ME, DB, VK, CvT).

62-5 AP: Consider an evening meeting with delegates to explain more about the Secretariat and engage them about the plans (All).

## **8. PECBMS progress report**

AK reported that since June, Jana Škorpilová is back working as a part-time employee and Javier Rivas Salvador is also working part-time assisting with data provision and program development.

The EC tender 'Technical and scientific support in relation to the deliver and development of wild bird indicators for the EU' project addendum was signed in July and secures Anna's and Javier's work on the task in 2021/22. Work includes the exploration of the association of the European bird species with EUNIS habitat categories based PECBMS site level data, and habitat association models for the identification of sites (areas) for habitat restoration outside SPAs. Richard Gregory and Simon Butler are advisors. The current EC tender will be finished by 2022; will need to seek for further funding.

Other project funding opportunities include Horizon 2020 'Advanced biodiversity monitoring for results-based and effective agricultural policy and transformation' which is likely to be a consortium of entomologists, soil scientists, agronomists and data scientists. So far EBCC, CSO and potentially BTO are interested, though it is not completely clear what the role of these organisations would be.

AK outlined the collection of national species indices; all data until 2019 had been received and checked, except for France. All datasets have been approved and it is great news that Croatia (farmland birds only), Flanders (Belgium is now complete) have been included for the first time. Data from the Moscow region has also been received but the plan is to publish the update without the Moscow data now, but calculate the outputs including these data in January and hopefully they will be included in the 2022 update. RSWAN was being run on new data, and the 2021 update of trends and indicators was planned for 30 November. Obstacles include new species from some countries, new countries involved and transmission to R. An error in RSWAN code took a month to solve the problem, plus the late delivery of some datasets. Using the new program RTRIM-shell the data calculation and approval process took longer than usual.

France had unexpected difficulties with their new database, Greece have been struggling with poor data in 12 PECBMS species but thanks to SP and JS this was resolved. The Netherlands had problems with RSWAN and their data had to be recalculated, and the Italian team sent fewer species than previously so more data was requested and recalculated, and Andorra had problems with data and RTRIM-shell (data for 2021 excluded but will include for 2022).

The 2021 trends and indicators update will include data from 29 countries, 170 species and 40 years of data (1980–2019). There will be the usual promotion on the website, EBCC newsletter and EC report.

The site level online tool is now complete and work is underway to produce a manual for coordinators and users. AG will be requesting new site level data up to 2020. The site level database currently includes data from 26,575 sites in 29 European countries (25 EU), covering 469 species, of which 153 are Annex 1 species. UK, Hungary and Portugal data is available up to 2014 and the rest until 2016.

PECBMS report was published in June and the contacts pages updated and a new item about national coordinators included.

PECBMS continues to be promoted through Facebook and Twitter. There have been 40 news items on Facebook since 15 April. The EBCC newsletter was sent out in summer and autumn.

There have been two new publications; Morrison et al 2021 'Bird population declines and species turnover are changing the acoustic properties of spring soundscapes' was published in *Nature Communications* and Burns et al 'Abundance decline in the avifauna of the European Union reveals global similarities in biodiversity change' paper has accepted in *Ecology and Evolution*.

Other work has focused on maintaining and updating the network and providing assistance to the national coordinators. There have been regular meetings with the new bird monitoring scheme in Serbia. Advice has been provided on the online tool and data delivery, data quality (Belarus, Andorra), methods (Bulgaria) and national Forest Bird Indicator (Lithuania).

There have also been meetings with stakeholders of the project including Anne Teller regarding the tender addendum and DG ENV Luisa Samarelli. There was also one month of regular meetings to implement national FBIs from EU member states. AK thanked all the team who have been very busy and really working hard; thanks echoed by the whole board.

## 9. International Census Plots

We discussed the work in Serbia and the future support for Serbia and other countries. Serbia did the pilot fieldwork and have completed data checking for the 34 sites counted (Early and Late complete visits). There are pending issue with the database; the data is in a good structure and should be converted okay in the future. Serbia is keen to continue next year and funding could come via the Turtle Dove gap monitoring through European Commission, in Europe, though the proposal is complex. PV is currently developing a proposal for International Census Plots and looks forward to informing partners at the conference in spring 2022. The scope of the ICP approach has been enlarged to take into account Russia. PV is preparing a document about developing monitoring in SE Europe.

## 10. Euro Bird Portal report

GG informed us that data from Russia is now in EBP live and thanked MK for making this possible. Data from Lithuania has also been added to the viewer. GG hopes the automated data flow with Russia will be established shortly. There are now 34 countries contributing data, and currently talking to Ukraine to include data in the near future. 21 online systems added to the database. Virtually all the data is flowing automatically using the EBP data standard, just 0.4% is submitted manually (Hungary, Russia manual currently). EBP is improving geographical coverage, and the proportion of complete lists. Sweden is now sending complete lists, which has made an important difference to modelling outputs. EFSA work continues; the Migration Mapping Tool has been provided but will not be made available until April 2022 at the conference. EBP are now working on a pilot early warning system for HPAI; three main elements to the project. i) Models of relative abundance based on EBP data for 12 key species. ii) Models of bird movements (long distance and local) based on EURING data for the same 12 species. iii) Development of a spatiotemporal risk assessment model of HP avian influenza introduction and establishment in Europe.

Current work is focused on EBP modelled outputs, increasing the use of the protocols table (EBP standard), improve taxonomic coverage (to all species), and seeking funding. Information on all species is needed for modelling approaches, and EFSA is requesting more species to be added. EFSA may be able to provide more funding, and possibilities for applying for funding from the European Commission. NK thanked GG and his team for their support.

## 11. Discussion on EBBA2 research

AL outlined the current research. The Swedish University paper focuses on making predictions of waterbird distribution. The paper on local colonisations and extinctions on European scale is still to be finalised, but hope to submit by early 2022 (*Nature Ecology and Evolutions*). A team in Finland is looking at how ecological barriers drive temporal shifts in bird communities and plan to submit in January to *Nature Climate Change*.

There is a possibility that a short presentation can be made in the EBBA2 workshop at the conference. These papers show good collaboration across the EBBA2 network and good to have input from the national coordinators.

Future plans and proposals include birds and pathogens; a consortium in Finland is looking at prevalence of pathogens in birds, bats, fungi and how these are linked to climatic variables in Europe. The paper tries to estimate which species have the highest prevalence of pathogens in Europe and look to produce hotspot maps. Use of EBBA2 data will be to quantify where the hotspots of the high prevalence species of certain pathogens are.

SH says we need to think about the use of abundance data and whether there are any EBBA2 led projects that want to use abundance data. GG says EFSA are interested in adding more species to their list.

EBCC listed as partners in the following proposals:

HORIZONS - A mechanism for science to inform implementation, monitoring, review and ratcheting up of the new EU biodiversity strategy for 2030 ('Science Service'). R CREAF (LB and SH) have participated in a consortium which has submitted an application. EBCC (EBBA2) data would be used if funded. Eva Furman from Finland is leading the consortium. This is a relevant project for EBCC to be involved in.

There is a proposal, "Understanding and predicting the resilience of European species to multiple global change drivers", for a PhD student to use EBBA2 and PECBMS data, led by Alex Pigeot from University College London and Richard Gregory from RSPB and AL is also a partner. The deadline is 15 Nov 2021.

There is also a Biodiversa funding call (<https://www.biodiversa.org/1772>) which will use EBBA2 abundance/occurrence data and modelled maps in prioritisation of protected areas in EU / Europe. This links to the EU biodiversity strategy where 30 % of the land and aquatic ecosystems should be protected. Lead of the proposal is NINA in Norway (Diego Pavon-Jordan).

Finally, Horizon-cl6-2022-biodiv-01-06 (<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/horizon-cl6-2022-biodiv-01-06>) is planned and will be led by German and Finnish colleagues. Proposed title: Advanced biodiversity monitoring for results-based and effective agricultural policy and transformation (BioMonitor4CAP). EBCC as a partner and use of PECBMS data. AK is working with RSPB and BTO to see what can be achieved. Deadline 15 Feb 2022.

## 12. EBCC Research Steering Group update

Recent papers with PECBMS data are Morrison et al 2021 and Burns et al 2021 (see item 8 above). EBCC have written a letter of support for Frédéric Jiguet who is submitting a research proposal to the ERC Synergy 'Bird Man' grant. The proposal deals with unravelling migratory connectivity, mainly in waders, and integrating connectivity and demography to estimate the impact of hunting and define, if any, sustainable hunting management scenarios. Data from the EBCC network to be used, if successful, will be the national and regional trends and atlas spatial modelling.



VK noted that engaging in research proposals is time consuming but must not be ignored. The EBBA2 team receive requests from people that actually know very little about EBBA methodology and that also takes time to get back to them.

### **13. EuropaBON**

LB gave an update on the European project from a previous call, with a focus on monitoring. The aim is to work with the Commission directly to mobilise biodiversity information and link to policy. EuropaBON is part of the strategy where this is being discussed. This will allow EBCC to work more closely with the Commission. The first part of the project aims to map biodiversity flows in Europe, and look how integrated this is at a European scale, and outputs such as indicators. From these flows, it will give a picture of where there are monitoring networks at the European scale, and where there is good integration, and gaps. This work will inform how to mobilise information to inform policy, and make recommendations on how flows could work. Bird monitoring is advanced compared with that for other taxa groups. The aim is to link as much as possible to EBCC projects such as EBBA2 live, so using EuropaBON to help move forward EBCC projects. A workshop in mid-November will bring together EBCC contacts, also invited policy contacts and officers from the Birds Directive. The hope is that this will start processes that better links policy and EBCC products. The project is a great opportunity for EBCC over the next two years to showcase projects.

SH stresses two main points about EuropaBON: data flows from field data to products that the Commission needs and try to use EuropaBON as a platform for moving forward projects – embed EBCC in Commission data flows and strengthen the network.

SN asks how reporting relates to Article 12 and Natura, and how winter waterbird monitoring fits in. LB commented that flows of data from winter waterbirds will be included, but the focus will be on PECBMS and EBBA2 to use as an example of what can be done.

62-6 AP: LB to contact SN to discuss the flows of winter waterbird data in more details.

### **14. Live Atlas**

SH updated us on the Live Atlas work to be conducted under the EuropaBON programme. The idea is that it is a trial to show the Commission that projects and data flows can be made from existing data. Currently focused on countries/partners that have capacity to provide data on a regular basis and try to reinforce what data and capacity we have, although ultimately this should be European-wide, involving all partners. It will be focused on a subset of species; suggested that this should be c50 species of farmland birds and will try to collect information on the presence of the species, using site level data from PECBMS and EBP data to produce 50-km occurrence maps and 10-km modelled abundance data. This can be proposed to the EBCC Network in April 2022. The project should be done in the framework of EuropaBON and include data up to 2022. MK asked about the possibility of including European Russia in the project. LB says focus is on the European Union, but the idea we are working on is that EBCC has a broader network, and European Russia will be part of the project. CvT asked about the link to EBP. GG explained that it will be a combination of live data from EBP but also data from PECBMS to produce a specific product. There will be some methodological challenges to combine the data, and also thinking about validation. GG asked if 'Live Atlas' is the correct name for the concept and welcomed better suggestions.

### **15. Data request process**

AK shared the draft proposal for the form used by the PECBMS team for requests for European data, supranational, national and site level data. The form describes the resolutions and process for requesting data. AK proposes there is one place on the website which describes all the EBCC data available and suggested an online data request system would be a valuable development. AL suggests similar information from EBP and EBBA2 would be very useful and would help shape the

online tool. GG said work is progressing on the development of the tool, though there are other work priorities at the moment. SH says they are developing protocol for EBBA2.

Summary of EBBA2 data requests: since January 2021, 14 data requests were processed in total, nine via the on-line form. The data were provided in 12 cases, we provided sample data in one case. Data handling fee was applied in two cases, general support to EBCC was offered in one case. Details were provided in a report by PV. AK showed a list of data requests received by the PECBMS team, including specific requests (seven) for site level data. PV supported the progress of online data request process but there will still be a need for some communication with those requesting data.

#### **16. Standing update on future Board roles and composition**

ME said that no new Chair had come forward but conversations are ongoing. A new Secretariat should in the medium and long term make the role of Chair easier but in the short term will require time to set up and develop. ME said he would be willing to continue as Chair in the short-term if there was no other solution forthcoming.

MK proposed that VK should be the next Chair, and ME offered support from the whole Board. VK says that due to the possible establishment of a Secretariat and the change in the working situation of ME we should rethink the future board composition and the division of roles. VK says she would like to see EBCC develop with a Secretariat, and keep a Board with experience (especially Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer) and proposes that she will discuss this with ME.

HH said he plans to step down at the spring conference in 2022. HH has played an important role in EBCC work and life for many years, and we thanked him, and look forward to working with him on future projects. We will therefore need at least one new board member in the spring.

62-7 AP: Share suggestions for new Board member by the end of the year (All).

#### **17. Update on communications**

AK said there had been two issues of the newsletter: summer (11 news items), autumn (8 news items). There are now 644 contacts for the newsletter (+40 since April). Afternoons are good for spreading news, receiving more hits. There are 467 followers on FB, and we have published 41 posts since April. The EBBA page on Facebook has 3240 followers, and 29 posts were made between April and November. On the EBCC website four news items have been published.

Upcoming news for next newsletter: Finland starts their fourth atlas shortly, new UK Red list published in December, register for the conference, Czech breeding atlas to be published soon, submit abstracts for posters for the conference. Thinking of a special issue of the newsletter when the EBBA2 online is launched.

#### **18. Bird Census News update**

AL updated us on Bird Census News. Issue 2/2021 aims to include an article about "Distribution and expansion of the breeding population of Goosander *Mergus merganser* in Switzerland", interviews with DP and HH and a focus on an online portal. Looking to next year we hope to have a paper on the impacts of covid on monitoring with a summary of a *Bird Study* paper coming from the UK (to be published Jan/Feb 2022), and also talk with AK and DP about the results of the EBCC survey. SN also had a questionnaire to IWC coordinators which could be incorporated. DP suggests write to more coordinators to ask for more information on impacts of Covid-19.

62-8 AP: Coordinate the articles for the focus on impacts of Covid-19 on monitoring (AL, DP, SN, DB)



We could also have a focus on how taxa other than birds are monitored in surveys e.g. UK BBS. It was suggested that we include a question about this in the questionnaire to coordinators. VK suggested results from the questionnaire could be used to make a poster for the conference.

Ideas for other themes welcome. AK suggested overview of all bird indicators, and a methodical article on RTRIM Shell. We agreed we should continue the interviews and have articles on online portals. A BCN editorial meeting is planned for Dec/Jan. GG offered to write an article by end of November. JYP also offered to ask a colleague. JYP suggested an article on PECBMS in BCN to promote new countries

Good progress since the last meeting on scanning copies of BCN however there is still a big job to transform into single articles and collate metadata (authors, titles, pages). ME has two large issues left to complete. DP has done all the issues she had.

62-9 AP: Offers of help needed to transform scans to single article format and metadata needed before achieving possible (All)

### **19 Financial update for 2020/21**

CvT presented the financial update. Regarding income, there have been two payments from Lynx, a €2880 donation from ICO from EBBA2 research projects and EBBA2 data handling fees from Uppsala University and Max Planck. Expenses have been banking costs, work for Anna Gamero, expenses for International Census Plot and bank transfer costs. The current balance is €77,444.21.

We briefly discussed what a sensible amount is to have in a bank account and suggested perhaps enough to cover running costs for a year. We're in a good position, with plans to use money in small grants.

### **20. News from BirdLife International**

AS told us that the European Red List of Birds was published on 14<sup>th</sup> October and was a really big milestone. The online event went well and was well received. There was a meeting with DG Environment to discuss the Red List, with the aim of securing funding for monitoring across EU and Europe and highlighting gaps in knowledge. Aiming to update the species of conservation concern assessment early in 2022; this will be important for guiding prioritisation of species at a national level. The species factsheets will be published on 9 December.

European Partnership will be meeting soon and site prioritisation, protection and management are top priorities. There is also an expert group on Birds Directive 1 Dec including Turtle Doves. The BirdLife Congress will be taking place on 11–16 September 2022 – we were encouraged to think about a project to be highlighted at the meeting. ME congratulated AS and her colleagues on the publication of the European Red List.

### **21. News from Wetlands International**

SN updated us on a partnership strategic workshop held in September. Current work is reviewing methods to produce winter pop estimates. Differences in count methods between the countries makes producing winter population sizes very difficult. Data is also being collected from national partners for the annual report.

### **22. Any Other Business**

Proceedings from Evora - Carlos Godinho updated ME that papers were going to authors in August for approval. CG has found someone to do the layout but there has been no further update on the timeline.

ME promoted BOU conference on Monitoring Science.

**Date of next meeting**

Agreed to aim for interim meeting in the New Year.

Dawn Balmer  
Secretary