

New Memorandum of Cooperation agreed between the International Wader Study Group and Wetlands International

DAVID STROUD

International Wader Study Group-Wetlands International Liaison Officer

The International Wader Study Group (WSG) acts as the Wader Specialist Group for both Wetlands International and IUCN's Species Survival Commission. This relationship was established in 1993 following the decision of IWRB (Wetlands International's predecessor organisation) to wind up its separate, but largely inactive, Wader Research Group.

An initial Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between the two organisations in 1993, through which WSG agreed to provide a range of advice and information to IWRB (*WSG Bulletin* 71: 2-3; 73: 17-18), whilst WSG would participate in the governance of IWRB.

The agreement between the two organisations has been mutually beneficial and a new Memorandum of Cooperation has recently been concluded and is reproduced below. This outlines those areas of activity where WSG and Wetlands International will cooperate, largely coordinated by the joint governance position of the WSG-WI Liaison Officer.

Joint activities will be planned and reported through annual and triennial work plans and these will be published in due course in the *Wader Study Group Bulletin*.

* * *

Memorandum of Cooperation between Wetlands International and the International Wader Study Group in relation to scientific and technical support to enhance the monitoring, conservation and management of wader populations

Wetlands International (WI) and the International Wader Study Group (WSG) agree to cooperate through joint activities that contribute towards the achievement of objectives contained in the Wetlands International 2002-2005 Strategy as adopted by its Board of Directors, and other relevant joint arrangements between WI and third parties.

This Memorandum of Cooperation describes the intentions of each Party within the period 2004 to 2007 inclusive, and both Parties will use their best endeavours to achieve the objectives of this agreement.

This Memorandum also recognises that Wetlands International and the Species Survival Commission of IUCN – the World Conservation Union have a joint interest in the work of the International Wader Study Group.

Both Parties have AGREED as follows:

ARTICLE 1: GENERAL COOPERATION AND FOCAL POINTS

- 1.1 Both Parties will collaborate in the promotion of knowledgeable management, conservation and monitoring of wader (shorebird) populations by maintaining and enhancing their existing communication and cooperation, and that with other relevant organisations (particularly IUCN/SSC, the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species, the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, WWF International and BirdLife International).
- 1.2 Both Parties will seek opportunities to develop and support joint initiatives, programmes, projects, and publications of mutual interest, and will develop such opportunities through an agreed three-year workplan, which will identify activities and resources required on an annual basis.
- 1.3 The focal points for general issues regarding this cooperation will be the International Science Coordinator for WI and the

International Wader Study Group-Wetlands International Liaison Officer. The WSG-WI Liaison Officer shall act in the rôle of an WI Specialist Group Coordinator, with being appointed for three-year (renewable) terms in line with both the WSG and WI Constitutions.

- 1.4 The WSG-WI Liaison Officer shall be both a voting member of WI Board of Members and an elected officer of the WSG, and hence a member of the WSG's Executive Committee.
- 1.5 Through single surveys, task forces and 'gap filling censuses', both Parties will seek to promote general ecological knowledge of wader numbers, distribution and conservation status, particularly in areas where such knowledge is currently unavailable.
- 1.6 Both Parties will collaborate with IUCN/SSC and BirdLife International in evaluating the conservation status of waders, providing information and technical advice.
- 1.7 Both Parties will cooperate to ensure that the triennial publication *Waterbird Population Estimates (WPE)* contains best available information on the population status of waders. WSG will, to the extent that it has access to these data, provide WI with relevant updated data every three years. Upon publication of *WPE*, WI will provide WSG with a spreadsheet of the *WPE* data and information for waders for dissemination on WSG's web-site as the basis for the information implied in Article 3.4 below.

ARTICLE 2: CONTRIBUTION FROM WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL

The activities below will be carried out to the best ability of WI within the resources available.

- 2.1 WI will provide and maintain dedicated Internet Web space to the WSG, or will include a link to the WSG's own web site.



- 2.2 On an annual basis, WI will provide space in the Wetlands Newsletter for the use of the WSG, and will distribute printed enclosures upon request.
- 2.3 WI will make available discretionary grants towards the scientific and technical work of the WSG, against the agreed workplan of the WSG.
- 2.4 WI will invite the WSG-WI Liaison Officer to its meetings, and will endeavour to contribute towards the costs of attendance, while given early notice, WI at its own cost, will attend meetings of the WSG.
- 2.5 WI will encourage and assist the WSG to publish proceedings of scientific and technical meetings, action plans and other species conservation products in the WI Global Publications series and/or the WSG's occasional series *International Wader Studies*.
- 2.6 WI will provide technical and administrative support upon request by the WSG-WI Liaison Officer, particularly to assist with WSG regional network development and agreed to pay communication costs incurred by the WSG-WI Liaison Officer.
- 2.7 WI will provide small grants to the WSG, on the condition that, a workplan of the WSG is submitted by the WSG-WI Liaison Officer to WI, for the following year.
- 2.8 In line with the roles in other WI Specialist Groups, the work of maintaining the WI's wader database will be undertaken by a WI Wader Database Coordinator, a role separate from that of the WSG-WI Liaison Officer. The WI Wader Database Coordinator will provide at least annually reports on the database for publication in the December *Wader Study Group Bulletin*. WI will provide other outputs from the database for tasks pertinent to this Memorandum (especially those related to population estimation) upon request.
- 2.9 Noting the extensive relevant information contained in WSG's thrice annual publication *Wader Study Group Bulletin*, WI will work with WSG to develop proposals to fund an enhanced gratis distribution, especially to developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

ARTICLE 3: CONTRIBUTION FROM THE INTERNATIONAL WADER STUDY GROUP

The activities below will be carried out to the best ability of the WSG within its available financial and human resources.

Forward Planning

- 3.1 The WSG will develop a three-year outline work programme, identifying which objectives of the WI 2002–2005 Strategy are being addressed. WSG will contribute to the development of future strategic planning by WI within the scope of the position of the WSG-WI Liaison Officer on WI's Board of Members.

Scientific and Technical Products and Capacity Building

- 3.2 The WSG will make available to WI on request, to the extent that it has access to this information, species information for

inclusion in WI publications and for compilation of reports to third parties.

- 3.3 The WSG will develop and maintain an information system concerning waders.
- 3.4 WSG will seek to develop and maintain a register of expertise within its membership related to species, geographical regions, habitats and other issues relevant to this Memorandum.

Finance and other Resources

- 3.5 WSG already functions entirely through voluntary means and will continue to maintain its membership and its financial viability. It will organise an annual conference, (generally associated with specific technical workshops) and will continue to engage in scientific activity independently of WI.

Publications and Reporting

- 3.6 The WSG will prepare a summary annual report for each year of the triennium of this Memorandum.
- 3.7 The WSG will report its activities on an annual basis, to WI by the end of February each year and provide articles, edited report proceedings of workshops and symposia summary for WI publications.
- 3.8 WSG will provide 15 copies of the *Wader Study Group Bulletin* to WI for distribution to other relevant WI Specialist Groups or to WI offices. The WSG-WI Liaison Officer and the WI Science Coordinator will determine the distribution of these *gratis* publications and will keep this under review. Copies of the *Wader Study Bulletin* (or other WSG publications such as *International Wader Studies*) over and above this distribution can be made available to WI on an 'at cost' basis.

International Coordination

- 3.9 The WSG-Wetlands International Liaison Officer will continue to coordinate links with the Australasian Wader Studies Group and other such regional interest groups for the purposes of Wetlands International Specialist Group liaison, and will identify and agree with Wetlands International a research group coordination structure to maintain these links.

ARTICLE 4: THE AGREEMENT STATUS

- 4.1 This agreement will be effective from the date signed by both Parties and will remain in force until 31 December 2007.
- 4.2 This agreement may be terminated by either Party subject to written notice of a period of at least six months.
- 4.3 Nothing in this agreement shall affect in any way the independent status and role of the WSG.
- 4.4 Any amendment to this Memorandum will only be made on the basis of a written agreement signed by both Parties.
- 4.5 The focal points will aim to assess the implementation of this every year.

Signed by:

Dr D. Taylor
Wetlands International

Hermann Hötter
International Wader Study Group

