

Our ref: DWOE410117/GW

14 September 2016

Dear Mr Armstrong-Braun,

Thank you for your email of 14 August about your email of 8 February about the Agreement on Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds of the Bonn Convention.

We replied to you on 11 February with the following information:

Has the UK Government ratified this agreement?

The Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) was concluded in The Hague, the Netherlands in 1995 and entered into force in the UK in November 1999.

Has it been transposed into UK Law?

The UK ratified AEWA in 1999. A UK Implementation Plan has been published, highlighting existing and proposed UK activity that will contribute to the aims of the Agreement. The UK's legal obligations for the protection of endangered migratory waterbird species are implemented by means of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended), the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended), and the Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985 (as amended). There is also provision for the protection of sites important for waterbird species (including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds, and UK wetlands designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands). The legal status of these internationally important sites is strengthened by the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended), the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations 2007 (as amended) and the Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended).

Which Government Department has the Duty to monitor and enforce the agreement as in UK planning regime Human request for development affecting existing and new wetlands for any activity especially fishing and tourism over-rides this Agreement?

In the main it is Defra who has the responsibility to monitor and enforce the Agreement and it does this with the assistance of the country agencies and the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC). JNCC advises Government on the implementation of AEWA both within the UK and internationally and attends AEWA meetings in a technical support and advisory role. JNCC drafted the UK's AEWA Implementation Plan and promotes the uptake of the desirable actions there identified. To this end, it manages a range of relevant research and surveys together with a number of other organisations. In particular, it is a partner in the UK's main waterbird monitoring scheme, the Wetland Bird Survey (together with the Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, the British Trust for Ornithology and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). It has published a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which each UK waterbird population is protected by the UK's national network of SPAs.

If it is enforced, how?

AEWA is enforced through the provisions of the various pieces of legislation referred to above.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Wilson
Defra - Ministerial Contact Unit

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)

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