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Memorandum on AMBI Observer engagement

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Memorandum to Senior Arctic Officials 1/3/2018

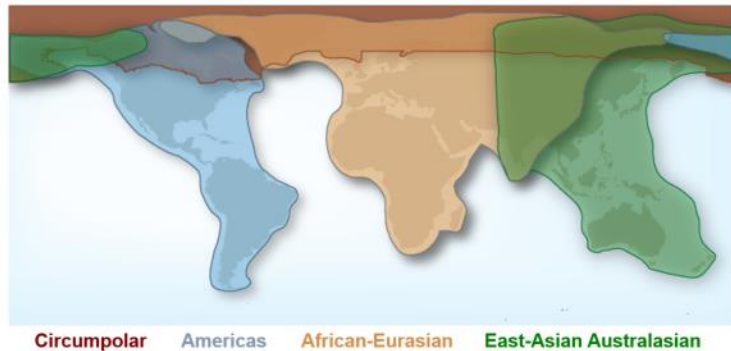
Arctic Council Observers
Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative

PURPOSE:

The Arctic Council (AC) recognizes Observer engagement as a key aspect in its evolution. Special Observer sessions held as part of Senior Arctic Officials' (SAO) meetings have focused on how Observers participate in AC Working Groups (WG). This memo provides an overview of how CAFF, via the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative (AMBI), is working to establish new and innovative ways to engage Arctic Council Observers.

COMMON CHALLENGES

Successful conservation of migratory species requires cooperation by all states across flyways where these species spend time. Recognising this, CAFF is working to actively engage Observers in the development, implementation and resourcing of AMBI.

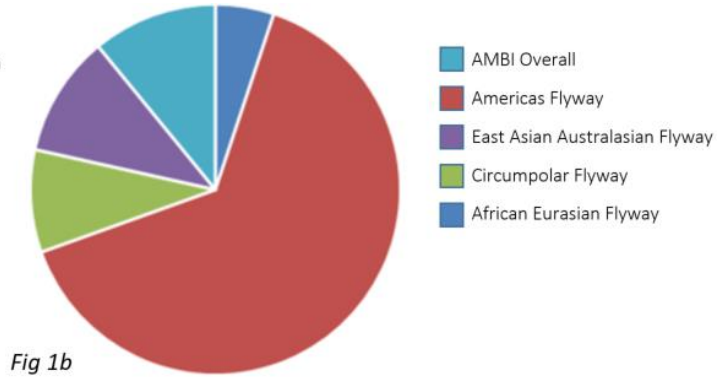
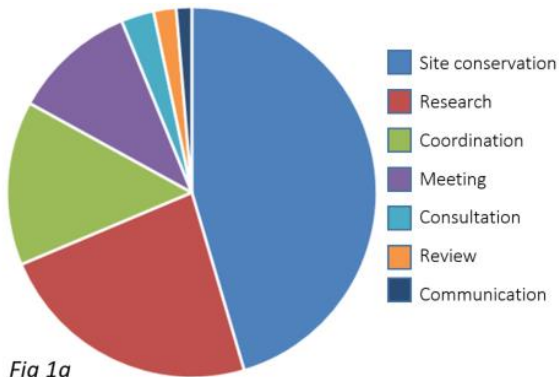


AMBI has secured the following:

- Experts: from Observer States and Organisations are members of the AMBI flyway Steering Committees.
- Coordination and Technical Meetings: Observer states (The Netherlands 2016, Singapore 2017, and China 2018 (planned)) have hosted workshops to guide and develop the implementation of the AMBI workplan in their regions.
- Products: UN Environment as an observer organisation has partnered with CAFF to develop infographic communication tools highlighting AMBI priorities.
- Funding: Observer states (Germany, The Netherlands, Singapore) along with Arctic States (Canada, Norway, Sweden, US), the Project Support Instrument and Manomet are providing resources to support AMBI overall and flyway coordination in both Arctic and non-Arctic States:
 - Overall AMBI Coordinator: based in Canada. 20% position
 - American Flyway Coordinator: hosted with the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, Ecuador. 50% position
 - African Eurasian Flyway Coordinator: hosted at the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat, Wilhelmshaven, Germany. 100% position
 - East Asian Australasian Flyway Coordinator: hosted at the National Parks Board, Singapore. 100% position

HABITAT PROTECTION:

1,458,888 Euros have been leveraged since 2015 when the AMBI workplan was approved. Fig 1a shows conservation actions these funds have been used to address conservation actions while Fig 1b shows the flyways where these funds have been applied:



EXAMPLES OF CONSERVATION ACTIONS:

- Americas Flyway: important areas for shorebirds (Willapa Bay and Long Beach Peninsula, WA, USA) were successfully nominated as WHRSN sites under AMBI related work on documenting their importance and developing management plans. Other site nominations are pending.
- East Asian-Australasian Flyway: stemming from the AMBI Workshop in Singapore a task force was established under the East Asian Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) focused on the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds. In Oct 2017 the UN Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) passed a resolution extending this work to assess and address the illegal killing of birds in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway.
- African Eurasian Flyway: AMBI is supporting work by the Common Wadden Sea Secretariat to assist in the resubmission of the Bijagos World Heritage Nomination in western Africa as an important wintering site for birds breeding in the European Arctic.
- Circumpolar Flyway: seabird bycatch is being assessed for the first time in Arctic Canada. This has included engaging with regulatory and industry partners to increase understanding of how bycatch may impact seabird populations, and how it can be reduced through industry practices.

NEXT STEPS:

- AMBI Flyway Coordinators in place for 1-year period from May 2018.
- Expand resource base to support Flyway Coordination tasks.
- Seek additional funds for development of AMBI communication tools such as flyway infographics.
- Engage non-Arctic states along each Flyway in implementation of AMBI conservation actions
- Organise at the Arctic Biodiversity Congress (Oct) a meeting with Arctic Council States and Observers to discuss the next phase of AMBI development after the 2015-2019 Work Plan.
- Organise in cooperation with CMS an AMBI workshop in South America to better engage partners in the region.
- Continue working with China to plan and host the China AMBI workshop.