



Project “Migratory Birds for People”

NEWSLETTER no. 3 (June 2010)

Deventer, June, 2010

Dear colleagues,

Just before most of us go for a summer-recess we have some news we would like to share with you all. With this third newsletter we will inform you about the latest developments in our project. We hope this may give you the evidence that the process in the project is still going on.

We wish you good reading and of course also a sunny and nice holiday time!

On behalf of the steering group,
Roelof Heringa

Results of the workshop 3-4 June 2010 in Oostvaardersplassen (NL)

We like to share with you the following actions which have been decided during this second meeting.
[with thanks to Taej Mundkur for the text from the minutes of the meeting]

Planning Meeting

3 June 2010, Oostvaardersplassen, Lelystad, The Netherlands

Actions agreed:

1. Circulate draft work plan to the network members for review and input.
2. Circulate draft resource plan to the network members for review and input.
3. It was agreed that in the current global economic situation, it was realistic and important to continue networking and communication between the network centres and to gradually build up the network. Three funding sources would be pursued and others identified with the help of the whole network. Actions identified for three potential funding sources to support network proposal development need to be undertaken by identified leads and partners.
 - WI to take the lead to prepare and submit a proposal, on behalf of partnership. This will be developed in close involvement of network partners and locally with Staatsbosbeheer.
 - WLI to take the lead to identify options to secure support from within WWT to prepare and submit the proposal on behalf of partnership. This will be developed in close involvement of partners (particularly WI) which has offices, ongoing activities and strong networks in west Africa.
 - Staatsbosbeheer to take the lead to identify options to secure support from within Staatsbosbeheer to prepare the proposal, with close involvement of partners (submission date to be considered)
4. Other funding opportunities for the network development and actions need to be identified by ALL network partners and shared to support ongoing reassessment of the work plan and funding needs.

Meeting highlights

1. Welcome by Staatsbosbeheer

Mr. Nick de Snoo (District manager, Flevoland, Staatsbosbeheer) welcomed all and opened the meeting. He outlined plans for the new centre to be opened in 2012. As the Oostvaardersplassen is currently listed as a Natura 2000, a Ramsar Site, and on the European Diploma of Protected Areas, the site is well known. He expressed the desire for the site to be considered as an international centre for western Europe with three main aims, informing visitors of healthy wetlands, as an internationally active network with Wetlands Link International and Wetlands International and through links to higher education through a strong connection to universities.

2. Introductions

- Mr. Theo Le Bruin (project manager of the new to-be-built Oostvaardersplassen centre, Staatsbosbeheer, The Netherlands) is responsible for coordinating development of the new centre.
- Mr. Roelof B. Heringa (Project Manager & International Affairs, Staatsbosbeheer, Directie Oost & Eurosite Twinning Coordinator, The Netherlands). Leads on the Migratory Birds for People project for Staatsbosbeheer, and originator of the project.
- Mr. Ponç Feliu Latorre (SERPA, Spain). Ponç is responsible for management of the works with the Parc Natural dels Aiguamolls de l'Emporda (5000h established in 1984, under the Department of the Environment and Housing, Govt of Catalunya, Spain). He manages the wetland centre and maintains



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- contact with local NGOs, coordinates running of thematic summer camps (4-5000 people a year) and education for tourists (100,000/y), mainly in the summer.
- Ms. Liesbet Cleynhens (Natuurpunt, Belgium). The NGO aims to buy and protect land for nature, currently about 17,000h, with 87000 members and their families. Liesbet is responsible for 11 Natuurpunt visitor centres in Belgium.
 - Mr. Chris Rostron (Coordinator of Wetland Link International (UK). Leads on the Migratory Birds for People project for WLI. WWT has 9 visitor centres in the UK, WLI has 300 members globally, mainly wetland centres.
 - Mr Alex Kaat (Manager, Communications and Advocacy, Wetlands International, The Netherlands), co-leads on the Migratory Birds for People project for WI.
 - Mr. Taej Mundkur (Programme Manager, Flyways, Wetlands International, The Netherlands), co-leads on the Migratory Birds for People project for WI.
 - Ms. Nicole Kerkhof, Programme Adviser, Environment and Technology and Advisor LIFE+, Agentschap NL, The Netherlands; joined the meeting briefly after lunch to make a presentation on EU Life+ funding and offer support (Agentschap NL is an agency of the Ministry of Economic Affairs. It carries out policy support for various ministries in terms of sustainability, innovation and international issues) and specifically helps to support applicants in the Netherlands to apply for Life+ projects. It is also willing to support project applications if submitted by WLI if it is a joint project with Dutch partners.

3. Presentation of the Project Outline

Chris outlined the background of the regional network project for centres in western Europe, with strong links to west Africa and possibly even Russia. A draft project log frame provided as a basis for the discussions.

The participants outlined their centres in more detail and opportunities they saw for the project.

Netherlands - Theo introduced plans for the developments for the new Oostvaardersplassen centre. The emphasis is for a centre as a first step for visitors to experience nature, outside the centre. There is a need to make them aware of the national and international context, to understand the total route of migratory birds. This would help them create value to understanding the quality of nature here as well.

The centre wants to be cutting edge in wetland education and of the highest international standards. They aim to (1) develop a multimedia facilities, including webcams, satellite transmitters to link to live movements of birds, (2) develop online information, so access at home should be possible to prepare visitors, and create a relation with all the important wetlands, worldwide, (3) keep away from traditional tools, such as stuffed birds.

If it were possible to attach a camera to a migratory bird, this could be ideal to provide an amazing story line of migration (although this still to be developed for public use).

He stated the importance of creating friends of wetlands network community and of the opportunity to be creating ambassadors of migratory birds and their conservation.



Nick de Snoo welcomes the participants of the workshop

Nick outlined that the new centre is to open in mid 2012. The architect's design is now being detailed. A programme of exhibition will need to be developed. 3.6 - 4 M Euro budget for the new centre, top of the bill in finance and design. 600,000 Euro for the exhibition and interiors, a part of which will be for tools for satellite tracking, protecting the birds. In addition there will be an annual budget to run the centre. So there was now a time constraint to produce good results. Additional staff would be required to trained and to run the centre. He felt that Oostvaardersplassen should not be considered only a local visitor centre, because the value is closely connected to the international context. The province of Flevoland is looking for the international role for the future and see this centre as providing such an opportunity. He stated that while there was agreement and funds for the construction of the centre and its running, there was still a need to organise the final steps of the funding. To achieve this, the province is interested in working with other organisations in the areas to look to fund some of the work given that the value of the area is much more in



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the international context and a wider range of partners will benefit from this new centre. A new project has just been initiated with an organisation in Almere and Staatsbosbeheer to mark harriers with satellite transmitters to study their migration and habits in 2010. They also plan to extend a protected land connection between Oostvaardersplassen and Germany for terrestrial migratory fauna.

Recognising that there is satellite transmitter-based migration information available for several species, a first useful activity should be bring it together and present it in an innovative way at the centre to educate the public. Then propose to finance some new projects for priority species. Creativity is important - innovative means to fund these activities is always possible, quoting the success of how breeding of the white-tailed eagle at Oostvaardersplassen has encouraged a TV company to film the birds being ringed and publicized it at their own cost.

For the "Migratory Birds for People" :

- Staatsbosbeheer very keen to play a major role in the project and the details of this still need to be confirmed.
- Staatsbosbeheer would like to use the Oostvaardersplassen as a showcase centre in the international network project.
- With close involvement of Staatsbosbeheer in the project coordination, a staff person will need to be in place to run this initiative (internal discussion is on going to secure this position).
- There was a need to define the components of the international network project more clearly, and this meeting was very important for this.
- More people/visitors need to be connected with nature through emotion. Need to realize ways of how to let them make these links.
- Ambition – should not define it too high to start with, but all visitors should leave the centre, with a sense of the international context and the appreciate value of the programme
- Creating cooperation and a role model, will take time, so long term project is needed for this. Regular meetings (every 4m to 1/2 year) on strategies, results, exchange experience is important to build and sustain the network, subject to funding. Such a project could provide the basis for building on national networks of visitor centres as well.
- Recognising that there is a lot of information on migratory birds available (such as through various satellite tracking studies), a first activity should be bring it together and present it. Then to seek finance for new projects.
- Some satellite tracking work should be started in 2011 summer as results would be needed for development of displays in the centre (by September 2011)

Belgium – Liesbeth. Sees a great benefit of the Network project. Proposed that it was good to combine own funding with jointly raised increased funding to do projects. Get some funding via the network, or work to identify a means to get funding Life+ project option is good. The network was constituted by strong organisations and the alliance would make us stronger. How to link people to nature is the same problem and could be best tackled through this network. Best practices need to be shared and promoted in all countries.

The Visitor centre Blankaart is in an old castle, so they need to build another building. They have a small 2yr old exhibition - a lot of investment was needed. As they have a new exhibition, so ability to display new information, mainly due to space constraints, will need to be reviewed. It may be possible for other centres to use the information – to be checked and confirmed.

For the "Migratory Birds for People":

- It is useful to consider how to encourage visits to the centres in the network and provide information on the internet, with recommendations for visitation to the best centres of Europe – to be promoted to members and the public. This could connect to bed and breakfast places for tourists. Some centres can offer boat trips.
- Information on bird ringing would be good. The existing project on satellite tracking of white storks to Spain and Africa is welcomed, to repeat this for other species would be interesting for educating the public.
- Best practice from other centres and to learn from others is important.

Spain - Ponç outlined plans to build a touristic resort before the national park he works at was created. The EU biologists explained to the national and local govt of the importance of this site and called for efforts to protect it – this was the start of international cooperation at the site. The local people now see the economic benefits from the NP and visitations. Ponç sees the MBP project as important for international cooperation and strengthening international networks. Breeding and wintering places for migratory waterbirds need management, but saw that stopover places as even more important. Their site had a bird ringing and monitoring station, with no funds yet for satellite tracking work. Such new information was critical to explain to people about migration and conservation.



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Their information centre provides information and has facility and monitors to display information migratory birds. National posters and information exist but are old and more national focused.

Many international visitors come to the centre (mainly in summer) and it was an important opportunity to show them the flyway connection too. Environmental seduction necessary for young children - storks being a good example species for this.

Due to the current economic crisis, environment and culture budgets were the first to be cut. The park has some funds for maintenance and would be available for the network activities; could offer about Euros 10-15000 towards these activities.

For the "Migratory Birds for People"

- To create new and more information material in posters/brochures. It will be possible for their centre to use the information immediately, both as hard copy and digital products.
- As a second priority, satellite tracking of birds and display of this would be great, as at the moment, only ringing of birds is carried out here and migration information is very slow to get and less attractive to the public.

Suggestions from other centres

Feedback from the other centres completing the questionnaires and from the interviews conducted by Chris and Taej were considered. This input and feedback was considered to be most useful to give a clearer idea of the strengths, interests, focus and suggestions for the new project. The draft questionnaires were available to network members for review upon request.

Based on the feedback from the participants and the responses received from centres not represented at the meeting, a broad set of priority activities that could be developed under the network project was discussed. The draft plan (attachment 1) was developed. Potential funding sources were identified for phase I, with funding needs for the next phases to be determined.

It was agreed that this would need to be further discussed in relation to new funding opportunities.

Action: Circulate draft work plan to the network members for review and input.

Potential donors - Options, restrictions, co-funding, how to develop proposals

Based on the draft work plan, a *rough* working budget for a four year project of over 4.3M Euros was developed (attachment 2). This could provide the basis for the development of priorities for funding and slotting against various funding options.

It was recognized that as a cooperative network programme, the funding for the work would need to come from a range of sources, nationally through the centres themselves with additional resources generated through regional projects for coordination and regional activities, information resource development, etc.

National sources could be generated from national and local government, NGOs, as well as local banks and businesses that see the benefit of increased tourism to “their centres”.

A post-lunch presentation by Ms. Nicole Kerkhof, Agentschap NL provided useful information about the process of applying for EU Life+ projects.

Three main sources for the international support for the network were discussed further and elaborated below:

EU Life +	<p>Provides very good opportunity for strong structural support for the project (for a long term project). Many countries, partners and some centres have experience in running Life projects. New guidelines</p> <p>Requires detailed project proposal, complex and so time required, short timeline to meet September 2010 submission deadline. Useful to consider 2011 submission, recognising that this will delay support to the project until June/July 2012 if successful.</p> <p>Ms. Nicole Kerkhof, Agentschap NL is willing to support project applications if submitted by WLI if it is a joint project with Dutch partners.</p> <p><i>Action agreed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staatsbosbeheer to take the lead to identify options to secure support from within • Staatsbosbeheer to prepare the proposal, with close involvement of partners (submission date to be considered)
Darwin Initiative	<p>This UK based grant is highly competitive but provides useful mechanism to secure information and input from west Africa and ensure that the network covers the whole flyway for the migratory waterbirds in western Europe. WLI could submit the proposal on behalf of partnership (subject to confirmation of WWT fund-raising team support and 2010 deadline)</p>



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	<p><i>Action agreed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WLI to take the lead to identify options to secure support from within WWT to prepare and submit the proposal on behalf of partnership. This proposal will be developed in close involvement of partners (particularly WI) which has offices, ongoing activities and strong networks in west Africa.
Draagvlak natuur (Netherlands)	<p>This is a Dutch government from the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality provided as a subsidy for environmental work in the Netherlands, with a focus on environment education, information sharing and cooperation. A project up to 3 years could be developed, for about 250,000 E. It must be active in more than two Dutch provinces and focus on work in the Netherlands. It was agreed that the proposal would be developed such it generates a network focused educational/information resource with international input. The deadline for submission is 31 July 2010. Only a Dutch based foundation (such as WI) could apply.</p> <p><i>Action agreed:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> WI to take the lead to prepare and submit a proposal, on behalf of partnership. This proposal will be developed in close involvement of network partners and locally with Staatsbosbeheer.

It was agreed that in the current global economic situation, it was realistic and important to continue networking and communication between the network centres and to gradually build up the network. Three funding sources would be pursued and others identified with the help of the whole network.

Action:

- Circulate draft resource plan to the network members for review and input.
- Actions identified for three potential funding sources to support network development need to be undertaken by identified leads and partners.
- Other funding opportunities for the network development and actions need to be identified by ALL network partners and shared to support ongoing reassessment of the work plan and funding needs.

The meeting concluded at around 16.00 by Roelof.

The organisation and hosting of the meeting by Roelof and Staatsbosbeheer was greatly appreciated.



Chris and Ponç watching grazers in the Oostvaardersplassen



Kind request from the working group:

One item we have planned for the project is to provide the participating centres with short films from the Ramsar-sites involved in this project. For this we need footage from each area and we hope you will be able to give us some information of what already would be available from your area. At this stage we do not need the images as such, but only the information. So please, send your information with some details, describing the images that are available. {e.g. habitat, species, season, length of footage, format,...}

Your information will be welcomed by Alex Kaat : email: alex.kaat@wetlands.org

Thanks for your cooperation!



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News from Wetland Link International:

Chris Rostron (WLI) has recently moved to the countryside!
He is now based in Slimbridge.
The famous wetland reserve in Gloucestershire is now also home to the office of Wetland Link International.

Link:

<http://www.wwt.org.uk/visit-us/slimbridge/our-nature-reserve>

Slimbridge



Welcome back to the second issue of the WLI bulletin, WLI World. In this issue we show the progress with the WWN World Wetlands Awards, discuss the virtual wetland centre development, and think about how to celebrate the joint birthdays of Ramsar and WLI. Ramsar will be 40 years old, and WLI a landmark 20 years old.

The past six months has seen a lot of development, with new projects and the new website up and running. We have also seen the network developing in North America, as well as getting involved in a new flyways project in Western Europe and West Africa, called Migratory Birds for People.

If you would like to add anything to the next issue, please let me know and I will happily add it to the bulletin.

Best regards,

Chris Rostron, Head of WLI



Latest news about fund raising !

During our workshop meeting in June we have also discussed the issue of fund raising. It appeared that the timeline to apply for a Life+ Communication funding this year was too short, because the call for tender is 1st of September 2010. As this is too soon, Staatsbosbeheer has decided to support WLI in preparation of an application for the next call for tenders scheduled for 1st of June 2011. The preparations for an application for EU-funding (Interreg and/or Life+) will start in August 2010.



In the meantime, Wetlands International is working on an application for a funding of the Dutch Ministry for Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. (closing date 31st of July 2010) . We see this as a starting point for the project as a whole.

On the other hand, Wetland Link International is working on an application for the Darwin Initiative. This is a UK-funding relating to safeguarding the world’s biodiversity by drawing on UK Biodiversity expertise to work with local partners in countries that are rich in biodiversity, but poor in financial resources e.g. Western-African countries. So, here we will start working on the connection of our network towards our African colleagues!



We would like to take the opportunity to ask you, as the participants in the network, to explore seriously what kind of budget (by own resources or national funding) you could add to the project in the near future. Please, communicate this information to Chris. [chris.rostron@wwt.org.uk]

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Our network comes to life! Report by Ana Belén Martínez Fernández and additional remarks from Danne Nilsson.)



Report of the visit by Mr. Danne Nilsson from Lake Tåkern, Sweden to the Regional Park Salinas y Arenales de San Pedro del Pinatar.

Danne, nature conservation manager for the nature reserve Lake Tåkern - Östergötland in Sweden, paid a visit to our reserve on the 11th of June 2010.

In connection to the project “Migratory Birds for People” he contacted us in April to propose to visit us, because he would be on holiday in Spain around this date and want to take the opportunity to visit the Salinas Regional Park of San Pedro.

We met Danne on Friday 11 June and employees of the park and Ministry of Agriculture and Water joined us, 8 persons in total. During the day we visited the park.



View from a part of the park

The diversity of habitats offers the opportunity to observe a large number of plant species. In the sand dune areas, plants have adapted themselves to the mobility of the substrate - a factor for hampering the roots of vegetation - and the lack of nutrients. The dunes are mainly stabilized by the “Pinar de Coterillo”, pine trees like the Aleppo pine (*Pinus halepensis*) and (*Pinus pinea*) and a palm tree (*Phoenix dactylifera*). Remarkable is the presence of the only Juniper (*Juniperus turbinata*) in the pine forests of the region Murcia. In this area also characteristic species of Mediterranean shrubs can be found like Mastic (*Pistacia lentiscus*) and Black hawthorn (*Rhamnus lycioides*). The salt marshes in the lower areas, with species like *Limonium cossonianum*, *Sarcocornia fruticosa* and *Arthrocnemum macrostachyum* adapted to live in habitats with high concentrations of salt. In the wetter parts you may find different species of Sedges (*Juncos* sp.), *Scirpus maritimus* and *Schoenus nigricans*. In salty areas we find less variety in vegetation. On the edges of salt pans there are communities with salt-loving species and in areas with less salt occurs an abundance of reed vegetation (*Phragmites australis*), mainly in canals and ponds in the northern part of the park.

During our visit we observed nests of Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*), Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) and Avocet (*Recurvirostra avosetta*). We also spotted Yellow-legged Gull (*Larus cachinnans*), Black-headed Gull (*Larus ridibundus*), Slender-billed Gull (*Larus genei*) and Greater Flamingo (*Phoenicopterus ruber*).

Las Salinas de San Pedro del Pinatar and the surrounding ecosystems are an example of compatibility between salt mining, fisheries and the conservation of natural resources.

We exchanged documents from both areas, Danne Nilsson showed us a presentation of their Lake Tåkern Nature Reserve .

This has been a very fruitful visit and well exploited by both parties.



Avocet chick in hand



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Ana Bèlen and Danne Nilsson enjoying wildlife in Las Salinas de San Pedro del Pinatar

Impressions from a visit to Spain by Danne Nilsson:

Already last year me and my family decided to spend a part of our vacation in Spain. At about the same time, I saw a map where all partners in the project were selected. To my delight it turned out that one partner “Salinas de San Pedro” was close to city of Alicante, where our flight would land. I decided then to contact Ana Belen, who very kindly invited me. So on June 11th this year, I was privileged to meet the people who work in this very interesting area.

It turned out to be a very inspiring and pleasant visit, where I really got to experience this habitat type. First I received a detailed presentation of the area, including learning about the process to produce salt. I realised that this salt-production is a prerequisite for the rich bird life. After the theoretical presentation, we visited the Park for some hours, and looked at the many bird species that you can find here. During the trip we had a lot of discussions about management, nature-conservation and facilities for visitors. Finally, I gave a brief presentation of “my” lake, Tåkern.



In the visitor centre

After having spent a few hours in the beautiful Regional Park “Salinas de San Pedro” and meet the very friendly and knowledgeable people who work there, I noticed that many of the issues that I am used to in Sweden seem to be the same in Spain. I am absolutely convinced that we have much to learn from each other.

Hopefully, “Migratory birds for people” helps us to build up a network from which we all can benefit.

Danne Nilsson

edited and translated by Roelof



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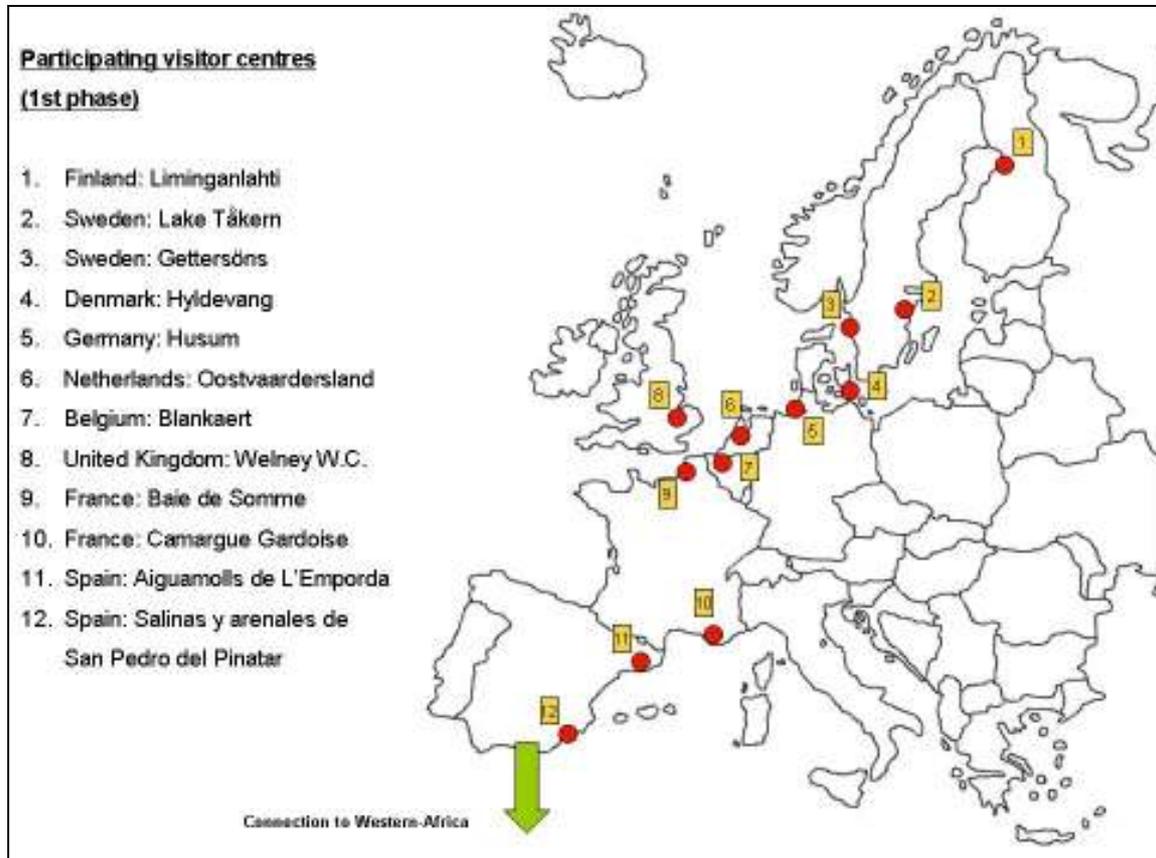


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