

Report on Initial Meeting of EAAFP Black-faced Spoonbill Working Group

Date: 12 October 2013, 09:00 – 19:45

Venue: Office of East Asian – Australasian Flyway Partnership, Incheon, Korea

Participants

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Presentations

1. Simba Chan introduced the history of work on Black-faced Spoonbill, including the International Action Plans on the species produced in 1995 and 2010 and cooperation between range states. This should be considered a success story for

international cooperation for conservation, resulting in a ten-fold increase in population numbers, an upgrading of the species status from Critically Endangered to Endangered and the protection of the key wintering site in Taiwan.

2. Lee Kisup presented the extensive research and conservation work undertaken in Korea, resulting in a current breeding population of 500-600 pairs and greatly increased knowledge of habitat and breeding requirements and the movements of the species.
3. Hiroko Koike presented the work being undertaken in Japan, included the results of DNA and stable isotope analysis, indicating the rather narrow genetic base of the current population.
4. Zhang Guogang briefed the meeting on the results of survey work in China, including a nationwide census in 2010-12. Up to 14 pairs breed on the Changshan Islands off Liaoning. However a survey of Changdao Islands, off Shandong failed to discover the species (aquaculture, tourism and the long distance to suitable feeding areas are all thought to be factors limiting potential breeding here). Conservation effectiveness in Liaoning is quite low: creating a protected area and increasing awareness, e.g. through “twinning” programs focused on BFS between the sister cities of Incheon and Dalian. A wintering survey highlighted key areas at Xinghua Bay (Fujian), Haifeng (Guandong) and Dongfang (Hainan). However, the principal site of Xinghua Bay, which held up to 142 birds, is planned for reclamation in the next few years. Principal threats are tidal flat reclamation, pollution, conversion of fishponds to farmland (Shanghai region), aquaculture development, wind farms (Hainan) and hunting in Guangdong.
5. Yu Yat Tung presented information on the annual wintering census and status of BFS in Hong Kong and North Korea.

Terms of Reference of Working Group

1. The draft TOR was presented, amended slightly (see attachment) and approved

Working Group Members

1. The following members were nominated and approved. Additional members may be added in the future.
 - Lee Kisup (Chair)
 - Yu Yat Tung (Coordinator)
 - Zhang Guogang (China)
 - Hiroko Koike (Japan)
 - Chong Jong Ryol (DPRK)
 - Representative of the Government of Korea (TBD)

Close coordination and invitations to WG meetings was noted as being particularly important for members of KEES, currently implementing significant

elements of the NEASPEC Migratory Bird project that includes BFS as one its key species.

Priorities of Work for BFS WG

1. In the immediate term, it is necessary to increase awareness and visibility of the WG and identify how to involve all interested persons in its activities. It was agreed to begin by adapting the BFS page on the EAAFP website to the WG, adding information and links (in languages of range state countries), with a view to creating also an interactive page. A press release was also proposed.
2. Areas of technical focus for the WG included i) continuing the marking and satellite tracking work; ii) continuing the winter census; iii) collecting and disseminating communication, education and awareness materials; iv) habitat studies and v) conservation actions.
3. The NESPEC project will provide an immediate focus for activities.

Plans for 2013-2014

1. Opportunities for meetings around existing or planned events include
 - International BFS to be held in Japan in March 2014
 - Bilateral Migratory Bird agreements of China, Japan, Korea and Australia, to be held in China in late 2014
 - IOC Congress in Tokyo in 2014
 - CBD COP in Korea in October 2014
2. A potential field visit to the Changshan Islands off Liaoning, China in the 2014 breeding season, to share information and lessons learned and raise awareness, was also suggested.