TAIEF workshop, Cusco, Peru “First Meeting of Signatories to the CMS Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Andean Flamingos”,
26 to 28 April 2016

INTRODUCTION

TAIEF support allowed this meeting to finally be held, after years of delay due to lack of resources. The meeting brought together signatories to the Memorandum of Understanding (Bolivia, Chile and Peru) on the Conservation of High Andean Flamingos and their Habitats, which operates under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, CMS.

SERFOR (Forestry Service of Peru), in partnership with the CMS Secretariat and TAIEF, organized the meeting. TAIEF’s support included the participation of the following EU experts:

- Juan Carlos Atienza Ortiz, Head of Conservation Unit, SEO/BirdLife, Spain
- Francois Lamarque, European and International Actions Officer, Ministry of Environment, Energy and the Sea, France

The 43 participants included Peru’s highest authorities for implementing the MoU:

- Ministry of Environment

Experience with EU’s nature Directives offers a wealth of relevant insights

The two species of Andean Flamingo are among the rarest flamingos in the world, inhabiting the wetlands of the high Andes Mountains in Bolivia, Chile, Peru and Argentina. Loss of wetland habitats threatens their survival. Glacier retreat, temperature increases and reduced precipitation resulting from climate change coupled with pollution from human activities (mining, agriculture), all threaten these ecosystems.

Protecting the Andean Flamingos requires regional coordination in defining corrective measures and monitoring. The purpose of this meeting was to approve a Regional Action Plan for the conservation of high Andean flamingos between the three signatory countries, and bring the European experience to this process.

The EU-wide Natura 2000 network of protected areas established under the 1992 Habitats Directive, coupled with experiences implementing the 1979 Birds Directive, offer a proven model for such an effort. Specifically, EU experts were able to draw on experience protecting the European flamingo - not only because of shared traits with the Andean species, but also with specific advice concerning the definition of objectives, and the organisational framework for effective regional collaboration.

In particular, it was agreed to specify the coordination and research framework for the Action Plan, much along the lines that have proven successful in the EU: the appointment of a regional coordinator (rotating responsibility among signatory countries), and national focal points to share research findings. A first task will be to take a census of the Andean Flamingo populations. Specifications for this include setting the dates and methodology to be used, as well as the network of wetlands to sample, and the methods for characterising pressures and threats.

To date Andean Flamingo conservation efforts have been undertaken nationally. The Action Plan thus constitutes a milestone for the initiation of regional collaboration. The concept of “protected areas” does not require the bureaucracy associated with national parks, offering an efficient model for pooling limited resources.

The relevance of the EU’s holistic, ecosystem based approach to conservation facilitated instant engagement and a shared sense of purpose. The workshop was a success,
and resulted in an agreed upon Action Plan for the protection of the Andean Flamingos.

**FOLLOW-UP TAIEF SUPPORT**

The following possibility has been identified for further TAIEF support:

- **Expert mission**: Building on the positive momentum gained from this workshop, fielding an expert mission to support the implementation of the agreed upon Action Plan would ensure effective and timely follow-up. Specifically, the fielding of a Spanish-speaking census expert in October 2016 to support the definition of the methodology to be used for the census to be carried out in February 2017 is recommended.

Note: TAIEF support should not overlap with parallel support from other EU programmes.

**CONTACT**

Stakeholders interested in the short-term, peer-to-peer support offered through TAIEF are encouraged to visit our website or contact the TAIEF office (tel.+48 22 583 96 90; email: TAIEF@niras.com)