

WCC-2012-RES-029-EN

Combating the illegal or unsustainable capture, trade or killing of migratory birds in the Mediterranean

OBSERVING that the countries around the Mediterranean serve as important wintering, staging and breeding grounds for many species of the African-Eurasian flyway;

FURTHER OBSERVING that bird migrations are one of the most remarkable phenomena in nature and that during their migrations birds are particularly vulnerable to changes, disturbances and dangers, such as hunting, which requires careful management and governance to ensure it is practiced sustainably;

BEARING IN MIND that over 40% of long-distance migrants in the African-Eurasian flyway have shown signs of decline over the last three decades and that governments therefore need to adopt urgent measures as this situation represents a serious threat to nature conservation and to ecosystem balance;

CONSIDERING that the protection and conservation of migratory birds is a shared responsibility of all countries of origin, destination and transit, both in the European Union (EU) and in the rest of the Mediterranean basin;

BEARING IN MIND the fact that millions of birds migrating between Europe and Africa are shot during the breeding season and on their migratory journey, or are captured and killed using massive and indiscriminate methods such as poison, nets, traps and glue, in many cases to justify the maintenance of old and popular traditions, and often for financial profit for individuals or organized crime generating illegal and untaxed benefits not related to basic survival needs;

CONSIDERING that some Mediterranean countries are covered by national legislation and European directives that should adequately protect migratory birds but that these countries do not make the necessary efforts to correctly implement and enforce this legislation, authorizing or tolerating methods that result in the death or captures of millions of migratory birds every year;

RECOGNIZING that some Mediterranean countries have adequate legislation to protect migratory birds and that this legislation is generally enforced, but that illegal killing or capture may still occur and that this should be eradicated;

CONSIDERING that other countries have extremely insufficient legislation with regard to the hunting of migratory birds or do not have the necessary means to enforce their legislation;

RECOGNIZING the efforts made by some countries to implement the EU Birds Directive through its transposition into State legislation and its enforcement;

ALARMED at the fact that large numbers of birds, particularly migratory birds, die every year in the countries of the Mediterranean basin because of this, and that many of them belong to species whose populations are in serious decline;

RECALLING that specific recommendations were made to governments and civil society in this regard at the European Conference on Illegal Killing of Birds, held in Larnaca (Cyprus) on 7 July 2011, at which it was noted that the solutions to these problems often require a special cultural sensitivity and full application of the law as a first, essential step in this process; and

FURTHER RECALLING the EU's responsibility for migratory bird conservation, being a Contracting Party to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention), as well as to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and having adopted the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) and the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC);

The World Conservation Congress, at its session in Jeju, Republic of Korea, 6–15 September 2012:

1. URGES:

- a. the countries of the Mediterranean basin which have adequate legislation on hunting of migratory birds to ensure that this legislation is rigorously enforced;
- b. EU Member States in the Mediterranean basin to enforce their bird protection legislation and to rigorously apply the guidelines of the EU Birds Directive. Any use of derogations under Article 9 of this Directive should be very restricted and can only be allowed under certain strict conditions and if stringent controls and reporting can be ensured, with the aim of avoiding any misuse of the derogations permitted by Article 9;
- c. countries with insufficient legislation on migratory bird hunting, or which either do not have legislation or do not have the necessary means to enforce legislation, to devote the necessary effort to putting legislation in place that will guarantee the conservation of migratory birds on their territory;
- d. the countries of the Mediterranean basin to support the development and implementation, under the Convention on Migratory Species, of an Action Plan for the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory landbirds and their habitats throughout the flyway, for adoption at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as called for by CMS Resolution 10.27, ensuring that a strong component of the Action Plan includes measures to address the unsustainable capture or killing of migratory landbirds in the Mediterranean; and
- e. the countries of the Mediterranean basin to support the development and implementation, under the Convention on Migratory Species, through an intersessional working group, of guidelines on minimizing poisoning of birds, for adoption at the 11th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as called for by CMS Resolution 10.26; and

2. REQUESTS the Director General to:

- a. promote and cooperate with efforts to eradicate illegal or unsustainable bird capture trade and killing in the Mediterranean basin, with the help of the IUCN Commissions;
- b. communicate this Resolution to all organizations mentioned therein;
- c. involve IUCN Members around the Mediterranean in cooperative efforts to eradicate the illegal or unsustainable capture, trade and killing of migratory birds; and
- d. ensure the engagement of appropriate IUCN expertise in the work of the CMS Working Group on Combating Poisoning.

State and agency Members of the United States abstained during the vote on this Motion for reasons given in the US General Statement on the IUCN Resolutions Process.