



THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (MIKT) SUCCESSFULLY ADDRESSING A COMPLEX CONSERVATION ISSUE IN A DIVERSE REGION

Shot Honey Buzzard © SPNL

The problem

The illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds (IKB) is a serious conservation issue in the Mediterranean region. Mediterranean birds are targeted (especially during migration periods) and killed or trapped for food, as pets, or for trading. The methods for trapping or killing vary across the Mediterranean and include traps, lime sticks, nets, snares, shotguns, and poison. Estimating the scale of IKB is extremely difficult, but a coordinated study by the NGO BirdLife International in 2015 estimated that as many as 25 million birds could be getting killed annually across the Mediterranean, affecting 375 of the 561 species (ca. 65 %) recorded in this region.

Migratory birds know no borders, and their conservation depends on eliminating threats along all countries on their flyway. For some species, e.g., the Turtle Dove *Streptopelia turtur*, IKB can worsen its conservation status, for others, IKB is just another factor contributing to their declines. A joint international initiative that fosters a common approach to tackle IKB within a complex political and socio-economic landscape is therefore needed.

The Task Force

[The Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean \(MIKT\)](#) has been convened by the Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) in conjunction with the Secretariat of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), the Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit, and the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP) Working Group.

The mandate comes from [CMS COP Resolution 11.16 \(Rev. COP13\) The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds](#). The first MIKT meeting in Egypt (Cairo, 2016) resulted in the [Cairo Declaration](#), which adopted “a zero tolerance approach to any deliberate IKB which contravenes national law and the commitments under international conventions and MEAs”. Since then, another four meetings have taken place.

The work of MIKT is currently guided by the [Rome Strategic Plan](#), the common strategic framework of the MIKT and the Council of Europe’s Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention). Based on the Rome Strategic Plan, MIKT has developed its [Workplan 2021-2025](#), which is specifically tailored to the needs of MIKT members and requirements of the Mediterranean region.

MIKT TASK FORCE MEMBERSHIP

- 21 Member Countries + EU (CMS Parties)²
- 4 Observer Countries
- 12 Observer Multilateral Environmental Agreements, international organizations & networks
- 10 Observer NGOs

¹ Brochet, et al. (2016) Preliminary assessment of the scope and scale of illegal killing and taking of birds in the Mediterranean, Bird Conservation International, 26:1–28.

² Members of MIKT: Albania, Algeria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Libya, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, United Kingdom, and the European Union.

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Main Outcomes of MIKT Include:

SCOREBOARD	METHODOLOGY	TRAINING PACKAGE	LEGISLATIVE GUIDANCE
A "Scoreboard to Assess the Progress in Combating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Wild Birds". This is a voluntary self-assessment tool for countries to evaluate and rank the progress made at national and regional scale. So far, 35 governments have reported on their progress .	Baseline and methodology for assessing progress toward achieving the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030. This document proposes different approaches for properly assessing national progress vs. the targets set in the Strategic Plan.	A training package for Government Prosecutors on the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB) in the Mediterranean Region.	A concise legislative guide to countries developing or wishing to amend national legislation to address IKB.
MODEL LAW PROVISIONS	NATIONAL ACTION PLAN GUIDANCE	REVIEW OF GOOD PRACTICES	SOCIO-ECONOMIC RESEARCH GUIDANCE
A proposed structure for national legislation to effectively tackle IKB.	Detailed guidance for the development and implementation of national action plans against the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds .	Compiled by the EU, this document summarizes the best examples from Member States for preventing IKB at the national level.	A proposed methodology, guidance and common format for conducting socio-economic research into the motivations behind illegal killing, taking and trade of birds.



ROME STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2030

[Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region](#)

GOAL

Reduction of the scale and scope of IKB by 50% by 2030 compared to a 2020 baseline.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the scope, scale of and motivations behind IKB;
2. To establish an active prevention of the illegal killing, taking and trade of birds;
3. To ensure that the illegal killing of birds is addressed effectively and efficiently in national legislation;
4. To ensure that effective and efficient enforcement of relevant legislation is undertaken;
5. To ensure effective and efficient justice for IKB-related offences.

Photo: Quail trapped in mist net © Said Khatib

About CMS

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), also known as the Bonn Convention, works for the conservation of a wide array of endangered migratory animals worldwide through negotiation and implementation of agreements and species action plans. It has 133 Parties (as of 1 January 2023).

CMS engages all relevant stakeholders in addressing threats to migratory species in concert with all other aspects of wildlife conservation and management.

CMS Instruments

Animals receive protection under CMS through listing on its two Appendices, through global or regional agreements and through action plans.

For more Fact Sheets please visit: <http://www.cms.int/en/publications/factsheets>



<https://www.facebook.com/bonnconvention>



<https://www.twitter.com/bonnconvention>



<https://de.linkedin.com/company/convention-migratory-species>

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