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**ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION
OF BIRD SPECIES LISTED IN ANNEX II
TO THE SPA PROTOCOL AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

FOREWORD

The Action Plan for the conservation of bird species listed in Annex II of the protocol SPA and biological diversity follows a series of four Action Plans adopted by the parties to the Convention for the Protection of the marine environment and the coastal region of the Mediterranean. These Action Plans deal respectively with the management of the monk seal, and the conservation of marine turtles, cetaceans, and marine vegetation. They identify and lay out priorities and activities that need to be undertaken to attain their specific objectives. They also urge and encourage co-ordination and co-operation amongst Mediterranean states to work towards the achievement of conservation of a species or a group of species within this region.

The elaboration of this Action Plan follows various initiatives taken by other organisations, such as BirdLife International Partners in the Mediterranean countries, WWF, IUCN, Medmaravis, Tour du Valat, on the conservation of biodiversity, particularly with respect to birds, and their important sites and habitats.

In 1995 the Parties to the Barcelona Convention adopted a new protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean. Annex II of this new protocol lists the endangered or threatened species found in the Mediterranean, including 15 bird species.

Various actions are being taken at national level and at species level by several NGOs, particularly BirdLife International partners in their respective countries, to counteract some of the threats, which are being faced by a number of the species dealt with by this Action Plan.

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1. Introduction

1.1 General overview of the avifauna of the Mediterranean

Birds have always fascinated and captivated humankind's imagination. Their beauty and their song, as well as their power of flight have inspired humankind throughout the millennia. Their aesthetic, recreational, social and economical value is now recognized worldwide. Birds know no boundaries and they play an important part in nature's ecosystems. They are also good indicators of the health status of the environment. In spite of all this it has also been humankind who throughout the years has threatened their existence.

The Mediterranean is the home of several hundred bird species, some of which occur exclusively in this climatic zone. The seabirds that are found along the crowded coastal zone and the islands of this almost land-locked sea are the resilient ones and include, amongst others, the rare and localised species, *Larus audouinii*.

Pelagic bird species in the Mediterranean are relatively few, but one still finds several fine colonies of *Calonectris diomedea*, *Puffinus yelkouan*, *Puffinus mauretanicus* and *Hydrobates pelagicus* breeding along sea-cliffs or on small isolated rocky islands and islets.

Coastal seabirds, such as terns, occur in the river deltas and also on inland saltwater lagoons. Many coastal species, however, are also found breeding in sub-optimal and man-modified habitats such as salinas, while others rely on municipal waste dumps and discards from fishing boats for their food.

The ornithological year of the Mediterranean is dominated by the seasonal migrations of birds from Europe to Africa and vice versa, and several European bird species over-winter in the Mediterranean basin.

Bird Species as listed in Annex II – List of Endangered or Threatened Species

<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	<i>Pelecanus onocrotalus</i>
<i>Calonectris diomedea</i>	<i>Pelecanus crispus</i>
<i>Falco eleonora</i>	<i>Phoenicopterus ruber</i>
<i>Hydrobates pelagicus</i> *	<i>Puffinus yelkouan</i> ***
<i>Larus audouinii</i>	<i>Sterna albifrons</i>
<i>Numenius tenuirostris</i>	<i>Sterna bengalensis</i>
<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i> **	<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>
<i>Phalacrocorax pygmeus</i>	

* The Mediterranean population belongs to *melitensis*

** The Mediterranean population belongs to *desmarestii*

*** This has recently been split into two species *Puffinus yelkouan* and *Puffinus mauretanicus*

1.2 An overview of threats

Among the species listed as endangered or threatened there are those:

- Which are globally threatened;
- Which are endemic to the region and have an unfavourable conservation status;
- Whose populations are not concentrated in the Mediterranean but which have an unfavourable conservation status in the region.
- Whose populations are not concentrated in the Mediterranean, have a healthy conservation status but are regarded as a flagship species.

Birds have something in common. They are all threatened by several threats including amongst others:

- Oil pollution
- Direct and indirect depletion of food resources
- Non-sustainable forms of tourism
- Disturbance
- Direct persecution (such as illegal hunting and the use of poison)
- Mortality from by-catch
- Loss of habitats
- Degradation of habitat, particularly wetlands and small islands of high biological importance for birds.
- Introduction of and predation by alien species

1.3 Ecology and status of the species

The biology, ecology, distribution and conservation status of the 15 bird species has been presented in an information document entitled “List of Threatened Bird Species as Adopted by the Barcelona Convention”. It is composed of an annotated List compiled by Medmaravis and edited by J. Criado, J. Walmsley and R. Zotier (April 1996) and gives the status, population size and trend, ecology, threats and conservation measures of each species. This has been complemented by other national, regional and global contributions, particularly by BirdLife International.

There are still many gaps in our knowledge concerning coastal and pelagic birds and their habitats in the Mediterranean, particularly seabird movements and their distribution at sea. There is a crying need for mapping of breeding, feeding, moulting and wintering areas of pelagic birds in the Mediterranean.

1.4 Geographical scope of the plan

The plan covers the sea and the countries, which have a Mediterranean coastline excluding the parts of these countries, which are not of a Mediterranean bio-climate. Some of the species, such as *Puffinus mauretanicus*, and *Puffinus yelkouan*, have a restricted breeding range in the Mediterranean. Others, such as *Falco eleonora*, have migration routes and/or wintering areas outside the Mediterranean. There are other species, such as *Pelecanus onocrotalus*, *Phoenicopiterus ruber*, *Pandion haliaetus*, *Sterna sandvicensis*, and *Sterna albifrons*, which are widespread elsewhere, but have a limited range and/or a small population in the Mediterranean. For one of the species, *Numenius tenuirostris*, which is a globally endangered species, the Mediterranean is part of its wintering range.

2. Action Plan objectives and targets

2.1 The main objective

The main purpose of the Action Plan is to maintain and/or restore the population levels of bird species found in the SPA Protocol’s Annex II to a favourable conservation status and to ensure their long-term conservation.

2.2 Other objectives

1. To share knowledge and expertise between the Mediterranean countries.
2. To co-ordinate efforts among Mediterranean countries and other relevant initiatives and agreements to ensure the implementation of these activities.
3. To encourage a synergic approach among the Mediterranean countries in the protection of these bird species and their habitats.
4. To encourage research to fill the many gaps in our knowledge concerning coastal and pelagic birds in the Mediterranean, particularly seabird distribution and their movements, feeding, moulting and wintering areas at sea.

3. Strategic approach

In the implementation of the plan prioritisation will be addressed at three levels:

* **Species level**

- The present Action Plan should be implemented for all the species found in Annex II of the Protocol SPA and biological diversity.
- The conservation of those species, which are globally threatened, is to be considered one of the main priorities of the present Action Plan.
- The conservation of other species, which have an unfavourable conservation status at the regional level, should also be a priority.

* **National level**

- To map the distribution of the species on land as well as at sea.
- To identify important bird areas at sea.
- To identify and control threats.
- To identify, on the basis of the best available data, areas which should be protected.
- To carry out proper environment impact assessments for all proposed development where any one of the species is found.
- To elaborate and implement appropriate legislation.
- To pursue the principles and requirements of Agreements and Conventions.

***Regional (Mediterranean) level**

- To strengthen co-operation and exchange of information and experiences in research.
- To disseminate information.
- To promote and support the identification of important bird areas at sea.
- To promote the creation and monitor protected areas of coastal and marine important bird areas.
- To prevent and control the expansion of invasive alien species, particularly in small islands of high biological importance for birds .
- To identify and monitor the migratory hotspots

Collaboration at a broader international level with relevant Conventions/Agreements such as the Berne convention, the Bonn convention, in particular with AEWA Agreement, should be sought whenever appropriate.

4. Actions to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan

4.1 Protected areas

- Important bird areas at sea should be identified and should be given legal protection status.
- The breeding sites of all threatened species should be legally established as protected areas with an adequate management plan.
- Coastal and marine protected areas of importance to birds should be continuously monitored and properly managed.

4.2 Legislation

- Species should be afforded all round legal protection by the Contracting Parties in those countries where they breed as well as in those countries where they occur during other seasons, as per the guidelines provided by RAC/SPA (see para. 5).
- Legislation should include dissuasive penalties.
- Assessment of environmental impact on these species and their habitats by any type of development should be legally obligatory.

4.3 Research

- In view of the existing gaps in our knowledge concerning coastal and pelagic birds and their habitats in the Mediterranean, especially of their movements and distribution at sea, priority must be given to the mapping of breeding, feeding, moulting and wintering areas of the species concerned.
- Resources should be made available for researchers to fill the gaps of our knowledge, such as the establishment of a Mediterranean seabirds atlas, and monitoring population size and breeding success of less known species.

4.4 Awareness, Education & Training

- Contracting parties should promulgate the legislation concerning the endangered bird species.
- Contracting parties should seek and/or provide the training of personnel of monitoring, conserving and managing protected areas of importance to birds.
- The organisation of ornithological training courses *in situ* for trainers and personnel should be initiated and supported by RAC/SPA and the partners of the Action Plan.
- Public awareness and education programmes and campaigns highlighting the vulnerability of threatened species directed particularly to stakeholders and decision makers, should be planned and implemented in co-operation with non-government organisations.

4.5 National Action Plans

- Contracting Parties should establish National Action Plans for the conservation of endangered and threatened bird species in the Mediterranean.
- National Action Plans should take into consideration the implementation of the actions relevant to the respective countries proposed in this Action Plan.
- Future National Action Plans should address the current factors causing loss or decline of the bird species in Annex II, suggest appropriate legislative matters, give priority to the protection and management of sites, and ensure continued research and monitoring of populations and sites.
- Contracting Parties should apply and implement those Action Plans which are already in existence.

5. Implementation

5.1 Regional co-ordination structure

Regional co-ordination of the implementation of the present Action Plan will be guaranteed by the Mediterranean Action Plan's (MAP) secretariat through the regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas. The main functions of the co-ordinating structure shall consist in:

- Promoting co-operation among contracting Parties in those actions executed in transboundary areas and at sea in national waters and beyond.
- Promoting the development of a regional network for monitoring populations and distribution of Mediterranean threatened bird species, in co-ordination with other organisations.
- Supporting and collaborate with contracting Parties in the establishment of important bird areas at sea.
- Providing elaborated guidelines to assist countries in their efforts to afford adequate legislative protection to the endangered species.
- Elaborating guidelines for monitoring and management plans in collaboration with experts and other interested organisations.
- Organising meetings of experts on specific subjects relating to the ecology and conservation of the bird species found in Annex II.
- Preparing reports on progress in the implementation of this Action Plan.

Complementary work done by other international organisations and aiming at the same objectives, shall be encouraged, promoting co-ordination and avoiding possible duplication of efforts.

5.2 Participation

- Any concerned international and or national organisation is invited to participate in the necessary actions for the implementation of this Action Plan.
- Links with other bodies responsible for Action Plans dealing with one or more species found in Annex II should be made to strengthen co-operation and avoid duplication of work.

5.3 Title of Partner of the Action Plan

To encourage and reward contributions to the work of applying the Action Plan, the Contracting Parties may at their ordinary meetings grant the title of "Action Plan Partner" to any organisation (governmental, Non-governmental, economic, etc.) that has to its credit concrete actions likely to help the conservation of birds found in Annex II of the Protocol. Conditions for the awarding of the Partner title shall be adopted by the Contracting Parties following the advice given by the meeting of National Focal Points for SPA.

The co-ordination structure shall set up a mechanism for regular dialogue between the participating organisations and where necessary, organise meetings to this effect. Dialogue should be made mainly by mail, including email.

5.4 Assessment and revision

National focal points, in collaboration with national experts, will be expected to:

- assess the implementation progress of the AP during their meetings.
- suggest recommendations to be submitted to the Contracting Parties.
- suggest adjustments to the implementation timetable.

5.5 Timing

The actions advocated by the present Action Plan are to be carried out over a three-year period, starting from when the Action Plan is adopted by the Contracting Parties. At the end of this period, RAC/SPA will prepare a report on the progress so far made in implementing the advocated actions, and will submit this to the National Focal Points for SPAs, who will make follow-up suggestions to the Parties.

5.6 Timetable

Action	Deadline	By whom
Organisation of the first Mediterranean symposium on ecology and conservation of the bird species found in Annex II.	Beginning of the year 2005	RAC/SPA and Partners
Launching of the procedures for legal protection of species	1 year after adoption	Contracting Parties
Establishment of research programmes to fill the knowledge gaps about the threatened species.	1 year after adoption	Contracting Parties
Establishment of a directory of organisations and experts concerned with the threatened and endangered bird species in the Mediterranean.	End of year 2004	RAC/SPA
Establishment of National Action Plans for the conservation of endangered and threatened bird species in the Mediterranean.	2004-2006	Contracting Parties
Application and implementation of any Action Plans where they are already in existence.	2004-2006	RAC/SPA & Contracting Parties
Setting up of a regional network for monitoring populations and distribution of Mediterranean threatened bird species, in co-ordination with other organisations .	End of year 2005	RAC/SPA & Partners
Legal establishment of breeding sites as protected areas with adequate management plans.	End of year 2005	Contracting Parties
Elaborating guidelines for monitoring and management plans in collaboration with experts and other interested organisations.	2004-2006	RAC/SPA & Partners
Identification of important bird areas at sea.	2004-2006	Contracting Parties
Mapping of breeding, feeding moulting and wintering areas of pelagic species.	2004-2006	Contracting Parties
Preparation of reports on progress in the implementation of this Action Plan.	End of year 2006	RAC/SPA
Training courses.	2004-2006	RAC/SPA, Partners & Contracting Parties

Proposed Specific Plans

These Action Plans should be implemented in all the Mediterranean states where the species breed, winter or occur on migration. They should be reviewed and updated every three years. If sudden major environmental changes occur, which may affect any of the species' populations where the species occur in the Mediterranean, an emergency review should be immediately undertaken. The current status given below covers the countries that have a Mediterranean coast. Proposed actions, which apply to all species should include *inter alia* the initiation of public awareness campaigns of the plight of these species and the preparation of National Action Plans. Other ongoing Action Plans, which have been developed by other institutions, and which cover some of the species, are listed below, and should be taken in consideration and implemented where these species occur.

Cory's Shearwater
Calonectris diomedea

▪ **Current status**

The nominate subspecies *Calonectris d. diomedea* is restricted to the Mediterranean. It breeds in sea-cliffs, and on rocky islands and islets. The population has been estimated at less than 76,000 pairs, but surveys in the eastern part of the Mediterranean and in the Adriatic are lacking. There has been a considerable decline of the species throughout the Mediterranean.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Introduced mammals, such as *Rattus* sp., which affect breeding success; illegal hunting; taking of eggs and/or chicks; mortality from bycatch (longlines), development close to colonies and disturbance, and possibly oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).
European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

None

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To halt the decline of the population and maintain healthy colonies.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies, particularly in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies, including the taking of eggs and young.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under the threat of disturbance.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Monitor levels of Mercury and *Chlorinated hydrocarbons* in populations.
- Develop and implement management projects targeting the conservation of the breeding habitat and strict control of introduced mammals, as well as preventing the introduction of alien predatory species.
- Identify important bird areas at sea for the species.
- Elaborate an action Plan to reduce mortality at sea especially from by-catch

Mediterranean Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*

▪ **Current status**

The two subspecies of the endemic Mediterranean Shearwater have recently been given species status and are now considered as two separate species Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus** and Levantine Shearwater *Puffinus yelkouan*. As both species still appear in the protocol under one species they are being treated jointly hereunder. The Balearic Shearwater breeds in the Balearic Islands while the Levantine Shearwater breeds the Thyrreanean, Adriatic and Aegean Seas. Both are pelagic species, which breed on rocky islands and islets. The population of the Balearic Shearwater has been estimated at about 1750 (2002 figures by Spanish Working Group on Balearic Shearwater) pairs, while that of the Levantine Shearwater probably at less than 16,500 pairs. Some pairs probably breed along the North African coast.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Lack of food resources; lack of protection of breeding colonies; predation by Rats *Rattus* sp, Yellow-legged Gulls *Larus cachinnans*, and possibly feral cats; disturbance; collection for food (at least until 1970s); some mortality from bycatch (nets); and possibly oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

Species Action Plan for the Balearic Shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus* in Europe prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (final draft December 1999). A national action Plan for the conservation of the *Puffinus mauretanicus* was adopted by Spanish government in 1999.

Official Working Group in Spain (Ministry of Environment) to reveal status and propose conservation actions for *Puffinus mauretanicus*.

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To halt the decline of the two species, to restore their numbers to former status and to increase the knowledge about their biology.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies, including the taking of eggs and young.
- Monitor the population dynamics of the species and warden colonies.
- Control and if possible eradicate rats and predators in the colonies affected by introduced mammals and prevent any further introduction of terrestrial mammals in breeding colonies.
- Ensure the protection of the breeding habitat and create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.

* the Balearic Shearwater is classed as a critically threatened species by BirdLife International because of extreme risk of extinction in three generations (current decline over 7% annually).

- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Promote adequate fishing practices, which take into account the conservation of the species.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Undertake surveys of colonies and research on the conservation biology of the species.
- Identify important bird areas at sea for the species.
- Elaborate an action Plan to reduce mortality at sea especially from by-catch.

Storm Petrel
Hydrobates pelagicus

▪ **Current status**

Pelagic species breeding in small to very large colonies mainly on islets and in caves along the coast. Subspecies *melitensis* is endemic to the Mediterranean. Important breeding colonies are found in Malta, Sardinia and Sicily. Breeding surveys are totally lacking for the Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean. A general decline has been recorded.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Loss of habitat; disturbance; predation by *Rattus* sp. and Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*; possibly oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

None

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To halt its decline and maintain healthy breeding colonies.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies, particularly in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under threat.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes, which may result in loss of habitat and the introduction and spread of invasive alien species, particularly mammals and Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*.
- Control or eradicate alien species that have become invasive.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Identify important bird areas at sea for the species.

Shag
Phalacrocorax aristotelis

▪ **Current status**

The Mediterranean Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii* is an endemic subspecies, which is present in western Mediterranean (Balearic Islands, Corsica and Sardinia), and the Adriatic, Aegean and Black Seas, breeding along the coast on rocky islands and islets. Mediterranean population is less than 10,000 pairs.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Human disturbance; oil pollution; habitat loss; mortality from bycatch; Seine net fishing and long-line hauling close to colonies and moulting areas.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979) (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

Species Action Plan for the Mediterranean Shag *Phalacrocorax aristotelis desmarestii* in Europe prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (final draft December 1999).

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To ensure the survival of the Mediterranean populations.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Inventory and map critical habitats.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Monitor populations.
- Create SPAs where the species' populations breed and encourage buffer zones surrounding breeding areas including adjacent sea area.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to breeding sites.
- Take measures to influence fishing policies in order to avoid negative effects on food stocks and food availability, and to avoid mortality from bycatch.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Identify important bird areas at sea for the species.

Pygmy Cormorant
Phalacrocorax pygmeus

▪ **Current status**

The main breeding populations in the Mediterranean of this globally threatened species are found in Albania, Serbia, Greece, Turkey, with some pairs in Israel and Italy. It is restricted to lowland freshwater and brackish habitats, and in winter frequents coastal lagoons, deltas, rivers and riparian forests. The whole population of the Mediterranean countries is probably less than 2,500 pairs.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Degradation and loss of wetland habitat; disturbance and hunting; destruction of breeding colonies.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column B Category 1)

▪ **Current Action Plans**

Action Plan for the Pygmy Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax pygmeus*) in Europe prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (February 1996).

Globally threatened birds in Europe Action Plans. Council of Europe – BirdLife International – EU Life-Nature (1996).

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To maintain the recent increase of the species' population size and distribution.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Afford strict protection to the species and its habitat, particularly from hunting, disturbance and development.
- Manage wintering and breeding sites in order to meet the species' requirements.
- Monitor breeding and wintering populations.
- Monitor water levels and quality at breeding sites.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Research its feeding and dispersal ecology.
- Develop education campaigns hunters.
- Restore degraded wetlands used by the species.

White Pelican
Pelecanus onocrotalus

▪ ***Current status***

In the Mediterranean it breeds in Turkey and Greece. Numbers declined in the last thirty years. Nests on the ground in large reedbeds, bare earth or rocky islands, in isolation from the mainland to be safe from mammalian predators.

▪ ***Current factors causing loss or decline***

Habitat loss and destruction; depletion of fish stocks; persecution and disturbance; pollution, flooding; disease; collision with electric power lines.

▪ ***Status under international instruments***

Class A - African Convention on the Conservation and Natural Resources.

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix I (Pal.) II (Western Pal.) - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean Current Action Plans (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column A Category 1a/3c).

▪ ***Current Action Plans***

None

▪ ***Action Plan objectives and target***

To reverse the decline of the breeding populations in the Mediterranean.

▪ ***Proposed action***

- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies and their habitat.
- Monitor and warden breeding colonies.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of: coastal development and infrastructure that impacts and/or fragments habitats; pollution; and overexploitation of fish stocks.
- Develop education campaigns aimed at local fishermen.
- Restore degraded wetlands used by the species.
- Create artificial nesting site close to foraging sites.

Dalmatian Pelican
Pelecanus crispus

▪ **Current status**

Vulnerable and globally threatened. In the Mediterranean small populations (totalling 1000 pairs) breed mainly in Albania, Greece and Turkey. Breeds on inland and coastal wetlands and nests on floating islands of reeds and on bare ground on islands, isolated from mainland to be safe from mammalian predators. Up to about 3000 birds winter in Albania, Greece, Syria and Turkey.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Wetland drainage resulting in a sharp decline of available breeding sites; collisions with electric wires; persecution due to competition with commercial fisheries.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Class A - African Convention on the Conservation and Natural Resources (1968).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix I & II - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

Appendix I - Convention on International trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column A Category 1a/1c).

▪ **Current action plans**

Action Plan for the Dalmatian Pelican (*Pelecanus crispus*) prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (April 1996).

Globally threatened birds in Europe Action plans. Council of Europe – BirdLife International – EU Life-Nature (1996).

A national action plan lead by the institute of ornithology in Croatia to re-introduce *Pelecanus crispus* in Croatia.

▪ **Action plan objectives and target**

To prevent any declines and to increase the population size to a level at which it can be regarded as safe.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Confer strictly protected status on the species and its habitat during breeding and wintering in all range states
- Establish wardened buffer zones around breeding colonies.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Manage in a sustainable way or restore where necessary all wetlands where the species occur.
- Replace overhead electricity wires by thick cables or lay them underground.
- Monitor continually the breeding and wintering populations
- Develop education campaigns for local fishermen and hunters, and decision- makers.

Greater Flamingo
Phoenicopterus ruber

▪ ***Current status***

In the Mediterranean, it breeds in localised sites in suitable wetlands, mainly in Spain, France and Turkey, as well as in Italy. Breeding colonies are established at sites free from human disturbance and secure from terrestrial predators. Breeding is irregular with numbers fluctuating from one season to another. Substantial numbers also occur in Greece and Cyprus but do not breed. Mediterranean population seems to be separated from Asiatic populations, with minimal exchange and overlap in Libya and Egypt.

▪ ***Current factors causing loss or decline***

Urban development; habitat loss for tourism development; disturbance; hunting.

▪ ***Status under international instruments***

Class A - African Convention on the Conservation and Natural Resources (1968).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column B Category 2a)

▪ ***Current Action Plans***

None

▪ ***Action Plan objectives and target***

To maintain healthy breeding populations.

▪ ***Proposed action***

- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Monitor and warden breeding colonies.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Restore wetlands where the species used to breed.

Osprey
Pandion haliaetus

▪ ***Current status***

A cosmopolitan species, which is vulnerable in several regions. Less than 70 pairs have been known to breed regularly in the last fifteen years in the Mediterranean (Balearic Islands, Corsica, Morocco and Algeria). Some local small populations have disappeared from other islands (e.g. Ibiza, Sicily & Sardinia).

▪ ***Current factors causing loss or decline***

Habitat destruction and disturbance at breeding sites related to tourism. Some mortality also from illegal poaching and electrocution also occur.

▪ ***Status under international instruments***

Class B - African Convention on the Conservation and Natural Resources (1968).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

▪ ***Current Action Plans***

None

▪ ***Action Plan objectives and target***

Reverse the decline of the breeding population in the Mediterranean.

▪ ***Proposed action***

- Make an inventory and map critical habitats supporting the remaining breeding pairs.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit the destruction of its habitat, and the disturbance, taking or trade of the species.
- Use area-based measures to protect and restore its habitats.
- Create SPAs where it breeds.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known breeding sites.
- Research the causes for the decline of the species.

Eleonora's Falcon
Falco eleonora

▪ **Current status**

Breeds in colonies along the coast of the mainland or on rocky islands, which are often uninhabited. The total world population is estimated at 6,200 pairs but no comprehensive census has been carried out. Almost all the entire population breeds on rocky Mediterranean islands. The Aegean islands and Crete hold about 70% of the whole population, but other substantial colonies are also found in Spain, Italy and Tunisia.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Predation by cats and rats; human disturbance in colonies; habitat degradation; taking of eggs and young; hunting; accidental poisoning from pest control methods.

Status under international instruments

Class B - African Convention on the Conservation and Natural Resources (1968).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - Convention on International trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).

Annex I European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

Current Action Plans

International Species Action Plan Eleonora's Falcon *Falco eleonora* prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (final draft December 1999).

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To maintain the colonies at the level of 1999, through preserving the breeding sites particularly the uninhabited islands.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies, including the taking of eggs and young.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under threat.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes, which may result in loss of habitat and the introduction/spread of invasive alien species.
- Control or eradicate alien species that have become invasive.
- Carry out breeding surveys in eastern Mediterranean countries.
- Prevent poisoning through awareness and cooperation of with farmers.

Slender-billed Curlew
Numenius tenuirostris

▪ **Current status**

Globally threatened. Once described as common in the Mediterranean region, it is now one of the rarest and least known species in the Western Palearctic. Migrates from Siberia across eastern and southern Europe to winter in North Africa. On passage, occurs in a wide range of habitats: salt marshes, saltpans, brackish lagoons, dry fishponds, steppe and freshwater marshes.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Habitat loss in passage and wintering areas. Other factors unknown.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix I - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

Appendix I - Convention on International trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Slender-billed Curlew under the Bonn Convention (CMS) (1994).

Listed in the AEWa Action Plan (Column B Category 1a/1b/1c).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

International Action Plan for the Slender-billed Curlew prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (February 1996).

Globally threatened birds in Europe Action Plans. Council of Europe – BirdLife International – EU Life-Nature (1996).

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To provide safe passage and wintering grounds in the Mediterranean.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Confer strictly protected status on the species and on its “look-alike” species, where it occurs on passage and during winter.
- Monitor and warden wintering sites
- Afford appropriate protection and management of all passage and wintering grounds.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of development near wintering sites.
- Train wardens, ornithologists and hunters in the identification of the species.
- Increase public awareness of the species critically threatened status amongst politicians, decision-makers and hunters.
- Ratify the AEWa Agreement in those countries where it is lacking.

Audouin's Gull
Larus audouinii

▪ **Current status**

Endemic species to the Mediterranean. Its main breeding populations occur in the western Mediterranean in coastal and island sites in Spain and in Corsica. Other colonies occur in other parts of the Mediterranean including Greece, Turkey, Tunisia and Sardinia. It was close to extinction in the 1970s, but better enforcement protection measures resulted in an increase in the breeding population.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Habitat alterations at breeding sites; changes in fishing practices and competition mainly with the Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*; egg collection and human persecution and disturbance. The depletion of food resources and chemical pollution and spills as threats and limiting factors are not properly known.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix I & II - Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column A Category 1a/3a).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

International Action Plan for Audouin's Gull (*Larus audouinii*) prepared by BirdLife International on behalf of the European Commission (March 1996).

Globally threatened birds in Europe Action Plans. Council of Europe – BirdLife International – EU Life-Nature (1996).

Action Plan to restore the Audouin's Gull *Larus audouinii* by Government Committee of Palm Islands Nature Reserve in Lebanon.

Official Working Group in Spain (Ministry of Environment) to reveal status and propose conservation actions for *Larus audouinii*.

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To maintain a healthy breeding population and increase the number of colonies.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies, particularly in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies, including the taking of eggs and young.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under threat.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Control or eradicate invasive competitive species and terrestrial mammals at colonies.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Identify important bird areas at sea for the species.
- Elaborate an action Plan to reduce mortality at sea especially from by-catch.

Lesser Crested Tern
Sterna begalensis

▪ **Current status**

In the Mediterranean, a small localised population (exact breeding population unknown but probably less than 4,000 pairs) of the endemic subspecies *Sterna bengalensis emigrata* breeds on two Libyan offshore islands. Occasional breeding has also been recorded in France, Greece, Italy and Spain.

▪ **Current factors causing loss or decline**

Occasional disturbance by fishermen; probably predation by Yellow-legged Gull *Larus cachinnans*; and possibly oil pollution and toxic chemicals.

▪ **Status under international instruments**

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - (African pops.) Convention on the Conservation of migratory Species of wild Animals (1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWa Action Plan (Column A Category 1/c).

▪ **Current Action Plans**

None

▪ **Action Plan objectives and target**

To maintain a healthy population and possibly to increase the population size.

▪ **Proposed action**

- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies, including the taking of eggs and young.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which may be under the threat of disturbance.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist and prohibit access to known sites except for scientific purposes.
- Investigate whether local fisheries impacts on the bird's breeding success.
- Prevent oil spills and chemical pollution of the sea.
- Establish population size and trends.

Sandwich Tern
Sterna sandvicensis

▪ ***Current status***

In the Mediterranean, a population of probably less than 3,000 pairs nests in colonies mainly in river deltas, on sandbanks and in salinas. Also migrates from elsewhere into the Mediterranean for wintering.

▪ ***Current factors causing loss or decline***

Coastal development; disturbance by humans and animals; predation.

▪ ***Status under international instruments***

Appendix II Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (1979).

Annex I European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

Listed in the AEWPA Action Plan (Column A Category 3a/3c).

▪ ***Current Action Plans***

None

▪ ***Action Plan objectives and target***

To maintain healthy breeding colonies

▪ ***Proposed action***

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies, particularly in the eastern part of the Mediterranean, where breeding surveys are lacking.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under the threat of disturbance.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development that impacts on wetlands and other breeding habitats.
- Restore wetlands sites where the species breed.

Little Tern
Sterna albifrons

▪ ***Current status***

Mediterranean population mainly along southern coastline and western basin, where its actual size is unknown. Quantitative data from the eastern Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean countries are lacking. Breeds in rivers and deltas, estuaries, lagoons and salinas.

▪ ***Current factors causing loss or decline***

Habitat loss; disturbance; predation; colony destruction.

Status under international instruments

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979).

Appendix II - Convention on the Conservation of migratory Species of wild Animals (1979).

Annex I - European Union Directive on the conservation of wild birds (79/409/EEC/1979).

European Union Regulation laying down certain technical measures for the conservation of fishery resources in the Mediterranean (1626/94 (EC) 1994).

Listed in the AEWa Action Plan (Column A Category 3/a).

▪ ***Current Action Plans***

None

▪ ***Action Plan objectives and target***

To maintain healthy breeding colonies.

▪ ***Proposed action***

- Inventory and map critical habitats supporting the colonies, particularly in the eastern Adriatic and eastern Mediterranean countries where quantitative data are lacking.
- Confer strictly protected status on the species.
- Prohibit all type of disturbances to the breeding colonies.
- Monitor and warden colonies, which are under the threat of disturbance.
- Create SPAs where the species' breeding colonies exist.
- Plan, regulate and/or manage activities and processes of coastal and infrastructure development near to known colonies.
- Establish population size and trends.
- Restore wetlands where they are known to breed.