

PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION
ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Larus melanocephalus in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

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| 1.1. Classis | Aves |
| 1.2. Ordo | Charadriiformes |
| 1.3. Familia | Laridae |
| 1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies | <u>Larus melanocephalus</u> Temminck 1820
Monotypic |
| 1.5. Common names | |
| English: | Mediterranean Gull |
| Spanish: | Gaviota Cabecinegra |
| French: | Mouette melanocephale |

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

The species breeds mainly around the Black Sea and in the East Mediterranean (Greece), and winters throughout the Mediterranean to southern Spain and Morocco. The species has expanded its range westwards in recent decades. It has become increasingly frequent in Northwest Europe, with evidence of an overland crossing from the Black Sea to the Baltic, and now breeds regularly, albeit in very small numbers.

2.2. Population

Only one population is recognized.

- Black Sea/Mediterranean (& Northwest Europe): 500,000; increasing (Rose & Scott 1993).

Estimates of the breeding population range from 150,000 to 230,000 pairs. The species has increased markedly at its main colonies in the Black Sea, and is expanding into Northwest Europe, but has decreased locally in Rumania (Cramp & Simmons 1983).

2.3. Habitat

Breeds in the steppe and Mediterranean zones in warm and dry open lowland areas, near coasts, deltas, estuaries, lagoons, marshes or large inland waters. Nests colonially, sometimes in huge numbers, on islands with sparse vegetation, and on floodlands, fields and grasslands; generally forages over grassland. Outside the breeding season, shifts to the coasts of the Black Sea and Mediterranean, and less commonly also to the Atlantic coast, and does not normally winter inland. Generally stays close inshore, and frequently visits harbours and fishing villages (Cramp & Simmons 1983).

2.4. Migrations

Migratory. The bulk of the population leaves the Black Sea in autumn to winter throughout the Mediterranean, with some birds continuing on west to winter along the Atlantic coast from southern Portugal to Morocco. Small numbers also enter the Gulf of Suez, but the species has not been recorded in the Red Sea. The migrations are mainly coastal, but small numbers regularly cross Asian Turkey and a few follow major river valleys in Eastern and Central Europe. There has been a marked increase in the occurrence of the species in Northwest Europe since the 1940s. It is believed that there has developed a very small but now regular autumn movement of birds, mainly immatures, from the Black Sea to the Baltic via western Russia and Poland, and that these are the birds which subsequently occur along the western seaboard of Europe. There are indications that many of these birds then return to their breeding areas in the Black Sea via the Atlantic coast of Iberia and the Mediterranean (Cramp & Simmons 1983).

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

No information.

3.2. Habitat destruction

No information.

3.3. Indirect threats

Permanently at risk from floating and beached oil.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

No information.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Morocco and Tunisia.

4.2. International protection status

Larus melanocephalus is listed in Appendix II (strictly protected fauna) of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), and is also listed in Annex I of the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC).

4.3. Additional protection needs

Larus melanocephalus is listed in the category 'Localized' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because it is a species which, although numerically stable or increasing, is restricted to only a few key sites during a part or the whole of its annual cycle. See attached note on additional protection needs for species and populations with an unfavourable conservation status.

5. **Range States**

See attached table.

6. **Comments from Range States**

7. **Additional remarks**

8. **References**

- Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds). (1983). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.3: Waders to Gulls. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- Golovkin, A.N. (1984). Seabirds nesting in the USSR: the status and protection of populations. In: Croxall, J.P., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds), Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 473-486. ICBP Tech. Publ. No.2. Cambridge, UK.
- Harrison, P. (1983). Seabirds: an identification guide. Croom Helm Ltd., Beckenham, U.K.
- James, P.C. (1984). The Status and Conservation of Seabirds in the Mediterranean Sea. In: Croxall, J.P., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds, Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 371-375. ICBP Tech. Publ. No.2. Cambridge, UK.
- Rose, P.M. & Scott, D.A. (1993). Waterfowl Population Estimates. Draft report presented at the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, 9-16 June 1993, Kushiro, Japan. IWRB, Slimbridge.
- Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (1986). The Birds of Africa. Volume II. Academic Press, London & Orlando.

Taxon: <i>Larus melanocephalus</i>		
Population		
(a) Entire population		
State	Pop.	Status
Albania	a	W
Algeria	a	W
Belgium	a	W
Bulgaria	a	W
Denmark	a	W
Egypt	a	W
France	a	Sw
Georgia	a	W
Germany	a	Ws
Greece	a	Ws
Hungary	a	S
Iran	a	V
Iraq	a	V
Ireland	a	V
Israel	a	W
Italy	a	Ws
Kuwait	a	V
Lebanon	a	W
Libya	a	W
Morocco	a	W
Netherlands	a	W
Norway	a	V
Portugal	a	W
Romania	a	Sw
Russian Federation	a	Sw
Spain	a	W
Sweden	a	V
Syria	a	V
Tunisia	a	W
Turkey	a	Ws
Ukraine	a	Sw
United Kingdom	a	W
Gibraltar	a	P

Key to Status	
S/s Breeding summer visitor	R/r Resident
W/w Winter visitor	V Vagrant
P/p Passage migrant	? Status uncertain
Upper case = primary status Lower case = secondary status	