



INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (MIKT)



ONLINE WORKSHOP ON MONITORING ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF WILD BIRDS (IKB)

Scoreboard 2023: Choosing a methodology and setting a baseline

WORKSHOP REPORT

(Prepared by the CMS Secretariat)

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ACRONYMS

AVBIS	Game Management Information System
IKB	Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of wild Birds
ISPRA	Institute for Environmental Protection and Research
MIKT	Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean
RSP	Rome Strategic Plan
WRC	Wildlife Recovery Centres

WORKSHOP REPORT

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Scoreboard 2023: Choosing a methodology and setting a baseline

1. The Secretariat of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) organised an online workshop on methodology for monitoring illegal killing, taking and trade (IKB) of migratory birds on Monday, 19 September 2022, 0900-1300hrs CET, held in English. The meeting was attended by 41 people from 12 Member countries and nine observer organisations, including several invited experts. The agenda for the meeting can be found in Annex 1, and the participants list in Annex 2.

Background

2. The Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region (RSP) is the common strategic framework of the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) and the Bern Convention for addressing IKB. The main goal of the RSP is to reduce IKB by 50% by 2030 based on a baseline established in 2020.
3. The relevant objective in the Rome Strategic Plan is the following:

Objective 1: To understand the scope, scale and motivations behind illegal killing, taking and trade of birds.

The relevant actions in the Rome Strategic Plan are the following:

1.1. a),the countries, in consultation with stakeholders decide on an approach for using the Scoreboard to set a baseline and a methodology for assessing progress toward achieving the Rome Strategic Plan

1.1 b),IKB hotspots are identified and a monitoring system is established in each range state.

4. In 2021, MIKT Members and Observers endorsed a guidance paper on [Baseline and Methodology for assessing progress toward achieving the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030](#): Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region. The paper presents two main approaches that may be followed by countries to establish a monitoring methodology for IKB and assess progress. The two main approaches proposed are:

Option A: A country chooses to attempt to estimate the full scale and magnitude of IKB across the country.

Option B: A country chooses to use indicators of scale that allow tracking of the trend and therefore progress over time without extrapolating to national scale.

5. The paper above also discusses the issue of establishing a baseline. Although the RSP proposes the year 2020 as a baseline, according to the paper, it is recognised that the baseline ought to be founded on solid data to allow for reliable comparisons. Consequently, if no such data existed in 2020, it is proposed that the baseline may be set at a later date if that would allow it to be based on more solid data.

Workshop Report

6. Mr Iván Ramírez Paredes (Head of the Avian Species Team, CMS Secretariat) opened the seminar and welcomed participants. He briefly explained the aims of the workshop and the importance of monitoring IKB.
7. The first speaker, Ms Claire Papazoglou (MIKT Coordinator), gave an introductory presentation outlining the objectives and actions foreseen in the Rome Strategic Plan, and the contents of the paper on Baseline and Methodology endorsed by MIKT members in 2021. In closing, she reminded participants that in 2023, there would be a Scoreboard exercise to complete and the questions in the Scoreboard on monitoring IKB that would need to be completed in 2023.
8. The next speaker, Ms Vicky Jones (Flyways Science Coordinator, BirdLife International), spoke about the advice and recommendations of a best practice guide that had been prepared by BirdLife International in 2015 and updated in 2022. She shared the link to the [Best Practice Guide for Monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds](#) and spoke of the importance of monitoring IKB. Ms Jones also referred to the use of technology in supporting IKB monitoring, such as drones and shot recorders.
9. The next speaker was Mr Rubén Moreno-Opo (Conservation Actions Unit, Deputy Directorate on Biodiversity, Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge in Spain). He spoke about the methodology chosen in Spain which relied on proxies and was based on data provided by the Wildlife Recovery Centres (WRC) in Spain. He reported that over the past decades, birds treated for IKB-related reasons had strongly declined whereas birds treated for accidents or because the public found them, e.g. fallen from nests, had increased exponentially.
10. Ms Papazoglou asked if the data on prosecutions that he mentioned provided any new information on IKB compared to the information they collected from the WRCs. Mr Moreno-Opo replied that there had been no significant additional information provided from prosecutions, but stressed that it was necessary to carry out detailed work to ensure that there would be no overlap between the data provided from prosecutions and those provided by enforcement agencies, or the WRCs.
11. Mr Alexander Griffin (Senior Conservation Manager, European Federation for Hunting and Conservation (FACE)) queried some data in the table presented.
12. The next speaker, Mr Márton Árvay (Project Manager, MME / BirdLife Hungary), spoke about the results of surveys in Hungary, targeted at finding poisoned baits using sniffer dog teams. He provided the results of the surveys across the country and provided detailed data from 2013 to 2020. He also shared [a published paper](#) which included all the data he mentioned. The second speaker from Hungary was Mr András Schmidt from the Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary, who explained to participants how the data provided by Márton Árvay would be reported in the Scoreboard. He also mentioned the recent creation of a forum, titled National Environmental Security Task Force, led by National Bureau of Investigation, which was expected to help with reporting and monitoring IKB.
13. Ms Jones asked Mr Schmidt what in his opinion could increase the rate of prosecutions for illegal use of poison in Hungary. Mr Schmidt replied that improving cooperation between environmental authorities and prosecutors and possibly with the judiciary, in the frame of the forum mentioned above, was expected to help. There were plans to invite the prosecutors to that forum. He also mentioned that joint international training of prosecutors/judges could be very helpful to emphasise the problem. Ms Jones suggested that perhaps ENPE and MIKT could organise another meeting or training for prosecutors similar to the successful [Workshop for Government Prosecutors on the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds \(IKB\) in the Mediterranean Region](#) (Segovia,

Spain, 2018).

14. The next speaker was Mr Fehmi Arikan (Expert, General Directorate of National Parks and Nature Conservation, Republic of Türkiye). He presented an online system used in Türkiye called AVBIS (Game Management Information System). AVBIS included a vast amount of data about hunters, hunters' licences, locations in which each one was allowed to hunt, and whether they had been found to hunt illegally. Additionally, AVBIS included detailed data on penalties and infringements that had been recorded. Mr Arikan demonstrated the detailed reports that could be exported from the database, where details on species, date of infringement, number of animals caught illegally, penalty paid, status of infringement and many other informations could be requested and analysed.
15. Mr Pavle Jovanovic (Independent Advisor, Serbia) asked who would enter the data on infringements in the AVBIS database. Mr Arikan explained that the data were entered by the staff at the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, since it was the courts that informed the provincial directorate about the progress in the cases.
16. The following speaker, Ms Arianna Aradis (Institute for Environmental Protection and Research, ISPRA, Italy), had prepared a presentation together with Mr Alessandro Andreotti (ISPRA), explaining what Italy's National Action Plan against IKB foresees in relation to monitoring IKB. She admitted that some actions in the National Action Plan had not been implemented yet but reported progress in some other areas, such as a national online database on poisoning incidents that were going to be used for monitoring poisoning in Italy. Ms Aradis concluded her talk by explaining how Italy had reported in the Scoreboard in 2020 and how accurate the Italian data were.
17. The final speaker, Mr Tassos Shialis (Campaigns Coordinator, BirdLife Cyprus), presented the methodology of the monitoring programme implemented by BirdLife Cyprus since 2002 in Cyprus. He stated that it was probably the oldest running IKB monitoring programme and was specifically focused on monitoring illegal use of nets for catching migratory birds. He explained the methodology and how the observations were used and analysed to provide estimates of numbers of birds illegally trapped across the country.
18. The presentations were followed by a short discussion and questions.
19. Ms Papazoglou then explained the exercise for the two breakout groups. Both groups were given a scenario (Annex 3) of a hypothetical country in which IKB had been recorded on a number of occasions with diverging numbers of cases estimated by NGOs versus cases prosecuted. The participants were to propose five key steps for the country to take, and five challenges that the country might encounter in the process of agreeing a methodology and adopting a baseline for monitoring IKB.

Report from Breakout Groups

20. Participants spent 45 minutes in the breakout groups, after which they returned to plenary and reported on their actions.
21. Ms Nadia Saporito (Junior Project Officer, Bern Convention Secretariat, Council of Europe) reported from Group 1 and outlined the following key steps proposed by the group:
 1. Identify relevant stakeholders and establish a Steering Committee for agreeing a monitoring methodology.
 2. Understand better the data already available and the information that those can provide (e.g., information from NGOs, prosecutions, distribution of cases across the territory).

3. Collect any other available data on IKB in the territory (e.g., (un)published literature, data from prosecutions, data from wildlife rehabilitation centres) and draw additional conclusions
 4. Identify hotspots using existing data (also through socio-economic surveys).
 5. Once the situation is clear, define clearly the objectives of the monitoring programme and establish the methodology. Decide on emphasis of programme and priorities and start monitoring.
22. In relation to possible methods that could be used, the group had discussed using automatic shot counters combined with on-the-ground checks. For monitoring poisoning incidents, the group had discussed using socio economic surveys to find out what local communities knew about those incidents.
23. With regard to the challenges a country might face, Group 1 reported the following:
1. Technical capacity in the country might not be sufficient (e.g. poisoning cases), so would need capacity building and cooperation with experts.
 2. Financial resources could be unavailable or limited.
 3. Different kinds of IKB might require different methods of monitoring.
 4. Existing data might include inherent biases that need to be clarified.
 5. Obtaining good quality data would require time, e.g., a baseline might take a while to become accurate.
24. Group 2 concluded that the hypothetical scenario was quite realistic, as in most countries, more than one kind of IKB needed to be monitored.
25. Group 2 identified the following key actions:
1. Start with a broad survey of different kinds of IKB to understand the issue at national level.
 2. Create a Steering Committee and decide on relevant stakeholders, similar to the situation in Italy before adopting the National IKB Action Plan. The Steering Committee would need to report annually and at each committee meeting.
 3. It was important to formalise the Committee and Action Plan but also to have some basic principles that all agree to, and broad involvement.
 4. It was important to focus on priorities, e.g., endangered species.
 5. Prosecutors and judges should be involved in this process, too, and it would be best to have designated environmental prosecutors.
26. In closing the meeting, Mr Ramírez thanked the attendees for their participation and the speakers for their presentations, and stressed the importance of monitoring IKB. He said that the presentations will be uploaded on the meeting website and that a meeting summary report would follow. He reminded the participants that 2023 would be a Scoreboard year and reported that the online reporting system would probably be available around April 2023. He ended the meeting by thanking the Secretariat staff that supported the meeting, Ms Ximena Cancino Ordenes (Conference Services and Avian Team Assistant, CMS Secretariat), Ms Saporito, and Ms Nora Weyer (Associate Programme Officer, Avian Species Team, CMS Secretariat), and gave special thanks to Ms Papazoglou, whose contract was due to finish a few days after the meeting for her work as MIKT Coordinator during the year.
27. The meeting finished at 13.02 hrs CET.

AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

09.00 CET	OPENING OF THE MEETING	
09.00-09.05	Opening of the Meeting	<i>Iván RAMÍREZ, CMS Secretariat</i>
09.05-09.30	Aims of the meeting: Why monitor IKB and what to report in Scoreboard 2023	<i>Clairie PAPAZOGLU, CMS Secretariat</i>
09.30-09.50	A best practice guide for monitoring illegal killing and taking of birds	<i>Vicky JONES, BirdLife International</i>
09.50-10.10	Monitoring IKB in Spain: deciding a methodology and setting a baseline	<i>Rubén MORENO-OPO DÍAZ-MECO, Ministry for Ecological Transition and Demographic Challenge, Spain</i>
10.10-10.30	Monitoring illegal poisoning incidents in Hungary	<i>András SCHMIDT, Ministry of Agriculture, Hungary, and Márton ARVAY, MME/BirdLife Hungary</i>
10.30-10.45	BREAK	
10.45-11.05	Monitoring IKB in the Republic of Türkiye through using AVBIS	<i>Fehmi ARIKAN, General Directorate of National Parks and Nature Conservation, Türkiye</i>
11.05-11.25	Monitoring illegal killing of birds in Italy	<i>Arianna ARADIS and Alessandro ANDREOTTI, Ministry of Ecological Transition, Italy</i>
11.25-11.45	Monitoring illegal trapping of birds with nets in Cyprus	<i>Tassos SHIALIS, BirdLife Cyprus</i>
11.45-12.00	General discussion and questions	
12.00-12.45	Exercise in groups: participants to work in groups to prepare an action plan for a hypothetical country that does not have a monitoring system for IKB nor a baseline	
12.45-13.00	Report back from groups	
13.00	END	

ANNEX 2

PARTICIPANTS LIST

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SCENARIO FOR BREAKOUT GROUPS

ONLINE WORKSHOP ON MONITORING ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF WILD BIRDS (IKB)

Monday, 19 September 2022

Scenario for breakout groups

In country X, authorities and citizens have recorded some illegal poisoning cases, affecting birds of prey. Three cases have been recorded in a particular area of the country in the last two years, and a total of 20 birds have been found dead. It is not known how serious or big the problem is, but some of the species affected are endangered and threatened.

Additionally, in the same country, citizens and NGOs often report illegally shot (alternatively can consider trapped passerine birds) birds and complain that there is a serious problem with IKB. The birds range from raptors to bee-eaters, swallows, and other passerines. Country X prosecutes on average around 45 poachers each year. These 45 poachers are prosecuted for having shot around 250 birds each year.

The NGOs in the country estimate that the scale of illegal shooting in the country is around 100,000 birds affected each year, but the prosecutions suggest that only 250 birds are killed.

Bearing in mind that in 2023, Country X, will be invited to complete the Scoreboard, prepare an action plan for Country X, in order to help the country:

- Establish a baseline for IKB
- Agree a monitoring system for IKB that will help identify any hotspots

Questions for discussion

Do you have all the information needed to proceed? What kind of additional information would you need?

What kind of support would you need to agree a baseline and establish a monitoring system?

Please list five key steps and five key challenges you would face in preparing this Action Plan.

Action Plan:

Objective	Action	Responsible party	Timeline (by when)