

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Phalacrocorax nigroularis in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT:

Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Pelecaniformes
1.3. Familia	Phalacrocoracidae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Phalacrocorax nigroularis</u> Ogilvie-Grant & Forbes 1899 Monotypic
1.5. Common names	
English:	Socotra Cormorant
Spanish:	Cormoran de Socotra
French:	Cormoran de Socotra

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

The species breeds on islands off the Arabian Peninsula and southern Iran, and disperses widely along adjacent coasts in winter south to the Gulf of Aden and southern Red Sea. Breeding is suspected in the Gulf of Aden and on Socotra. There is evidence of large-scale movements along the Oman coast, but these are poorly understood.

2.2. Population

Only one population is recognized.
- Entire population: 400,000 (Rose & Scott 1993).

Major breeding colonies include Zakhnuniyah Island with 50,000 pairs in 1980, the Huwar Islands with 50,000-250,000 pairs in 1981, and Az Zarqa' Island with 150,000 birds in the early 1970s. Some of the known breeding sites are presently unoccupied, while others hold very large colonies. Thus counts of breeding colonies in different years are not additive (del Hoyo et al. 1992). The total population has been estimated at about 100,000 pairs or 400,000 birds. No information is available on long-term trends, but it seems likely that numbers fell dramatically as a result of oil spills during the Gulf War in early 1991. During the Asian Waterfowl Census of January 1992, over 15,000 were recorded in Oman and 20,000 in Saudi Arabia (Perennou & Mundkur 1992).

2.3. Habitat

Exclusively marine, even to the extent of preferring not to fly over land. Breeds on small, low-lying sandy or rocky islands off desert coasts, and roosts on sandbanks, coastal cliffs and rocky islets (del

Hoyo et al. 1992).

2.4. Migrations

Migratory or dispersive, but the movements are poorly understood. Also undertakes some movements connected with feeding, occasionally in enormous flocks.

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

The bird is particularly vulnerable to oil pollution which has repeatedly had serious effects throughout much of its range. Constant heavy traffic of oil tankers in the Persian Gulf poses a permanent threat, while there have been a number of major oil slicks related to armed conflicts in the region. A major oil slick during the Gulf War in early 1991 is believed to have killed a minimum of 25,000 to 30,000 birds, mainly cormorants and grebes. P. nigrogularis was the most seriously affected species, accounting for 37% of the 1,350-1,500 birds brought into the recovery centres. The southward progress of the oil slick was eventually halted by Abu'Ali Island, and no oil reached Bahrain and the major breeding colonies of Zakhnuniyah and the Huwar Islands.

3.2. Habitat destruction

The only major threat to the habitat is oil pollution and other marine pollution.

3.3. Indirect threats

The bird is generally shy and sensitive to human disturbance. Increased human activity around the breeding colonies, including recreational activities, may have caused the abandonment of some breeding sites.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

None known.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

In Africa, Phalacrocorax nigrogularis is protected under national legislation in Ethiopia and Somalia.

4.2. International protection status

None known.

4.3. Additional protection needs

Phalacrocorax nigrogularis is listed as 'Near-threatened' in Collar and Andrew (1988), indicating that it was a strong candidate for treatment as a threatened species. 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**

- Brown, L.H., Urban, E.K. & Newman, K. (1982). The Birds of Africa. Volume I. Academic Press, London & New York.
- Collar, N.J. & Andrew, P. (1988). Birds to Watch. The ICBP World Checklist of Threatened Birds. ICBP Technical Publication No.8. ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.
- Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds). (1977). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.1: Ostrich to Ducks. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- del Hoyo, J., Elliott A. & Sargatal, J. (eds). (1992). Handbook of the Birds of the World. Volume 1: Ostrich to Ducks. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.
- Perennou, C. & Mundkur, T. (1992). Asian and Australasian Waterfowl Census 1992. IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.
- 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.

Taxon: <i>Phalacrocorax nigrogularis</i>		
Population		
(a) Entire population		
State	Pop.	Status
Bahrain	a	W
Ethiopia	a	P
Iran	a	Rsw
Kuwait	a	S
Oman	a	Rsw
Qatar	a	Rsw
Saudi Arabia	a	Rsw
Somalia	a	P?s
United Arab Emirates	a	Rsw
Yemen	a	Rsw
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		