

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Sterna paradisaea (Atlantic populations) in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.1. Classis | Aves |
| 1.2. Ordo | Charadriiformes |
| 1.3. Familia | Laridae |
| 1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies | <u>Sterna paradisaea</u> Pontoppidan 1763
Monotypic |
| 1.5. Common names | |
| English: | Arctic Tern |
| Spanish: | Charran Artico |
| French: | Sterne arctique |

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Circumpolar. Populations occurring in the African-Eurasian Region breed in Canada, the northeast U.S.A., Greenland, Iceland, Svalbard, northern Europe and Western and Central Siberia, and winter in the South Atlantic south to the edge of the pack-ice in Antarctica, mainly between 50°E and 110°E. No discrete populations are identifiable.

2.2. Population

Three main breeding groups have been identified in West Eurasia, but there is considerable mixing between these during migration and in winter, and extensive movement of birds between breeding colonies.

- Iceland/West Europe: 600,000+; decreasing in some areas.
- Scandinavia: 300,000; stable or decreasing.
- Northern Russia (east of 40°E): 120,000+.

The breeding group in Iceland and West Europe comprises well over 100,000 pairs in Iceland and 90,000-95,000 pairs in Northwest Europe (including 80,000 pairs in the British Isles). Some estimates suggest that there may be as many as 250,000-500,000 pairs in Iceland alone. Unpublished data suggest that the breeding population in Scandinavia is between 100,000 and 120,000 pairs, and that in Northern Russia at over 40,000 pairs. In Northwest Europe, the species is declining in Ireland, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, and possibly also in Finland after an increase between 1950 and 1970. However, the large breeding population in Iceland appears to have been relatively stable in recent years. No information is available on trends in the population breeding in northern Russia. The entire world population has been estimated at 2,000,000 birds (Rose & Scott 1993).

2.3. Habitat

Breeds at higher latitudes than any other tern, from the temperate zone through the boreal to the high Arctic, mainly along sea coasts and on inshore islands, but also in some regions inland along rivers and at freshwater lakes. Nests colonially, often with other species of terns, on low, rocky or grass-covered skerries and islands, rocky shores, sand and shingle beaches, islets in rivers and lakes, and tundra pools; also locally on heath, rough pasture, sedge grassland and peat bog. Entirely marine outside the breeding season; very largely pelagic, generally remaining well offshore and extending to the Antarctic pack-ice during the boreal winter (Cramp 1985).

2.4. Migrations

Populations breeding in Canada, the northeastern U.S.A., Greenland, Iceland, Svalbard, northern Europe and Western and Central Siberia converge in the East Atlantic off Western Europe and West Africa and migrate well offshore south to the edge of the pack-ice in Antarctica mainly between 50°E and 110°E. Immatures generally winter further north, with many occurring off South Africa. Populations breeding in Eastern Siberia apparently migrate through the eastern Pacific to the southern oceans.

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

The decline in numbers at some breeding colonies has been attributed to disturbance by tourists and other visitors, and displacement by gulls (Vermeer & Ranking 1984).

3.2. Habitat destruction

Trampling of the nesting habitat by cattle has been reported as a problem at some breeding colonies (Vermeer & Ranking 1984).

3.3. Indirect threats

None known.

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

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Benin, Gambia, Mauritania and South Africa; partially protected as a game

species in Ghana.

4.2. International protection status

Sterna paradisaea 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

The Icelandic/West European and Scandinavian populations of Sterna paradisaea are listed in the category 'Potentially vulnerable' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because they are biogeographical population which, although still with population sizes of over 100,000 individuals, have shown a marked decrease in numbers over the whole or a large part of their ranges in recent decades. 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. (ed.). (1985). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.4: Terns to Woodpeckers. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- Evans, P.G.H. (1984). Status and Conservation of Seabirds in Northwest Europe (excluding Norway and the USSR). In: Croxall, J.P., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds), Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 293-321. ICBP Tech. Publ. No.2. Cambridge, UK.
- Harrison, P. (1983). Seabirds: an identification guide. Croom Helm Ltd., Beckenham, 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.
- Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (1986). The Birds of Africa. Volume II. Academic Press, London & Orlando.
- Vermeer, K. & Rankin, L. (1984). Influence of Habitat Destruction and Disturbance on Nesting Seabirds. In: Croxall, J.P., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds), Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 723-736. ICBP Tech. Publ. No.2. Cambridge, UK.

Taxon: <i>Sterna paradisaea</i>		
Population		
(a) Iceland/W Europe		
(b) Scandinavia		
(c) Northern Russia		
State	Pop.	Status
Angola	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Belgium	a	S
Benin	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Cameroon	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Canada	a	S
Cape Verde	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Congo	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Cote d'Ivoire	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Denmark	b	S
Faroese	a	S
Equatorial Guinea	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Estonia	b	S
Finland	b	S
Gabon	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Gambia	a	P

Gambia	b	P
"	c	P
Ghana	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Guinea	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Guinea-Bissau	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Iceland	a	S
Ireland	a	S
Liberia	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Mauritania	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Morocco	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Mozambique	a	W
"	b	W
"	c	W
Namibia	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Netherlands	a	S
Nigeria	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Norway	b	S
Svalbard	b	S
Russian Federation	b	S
"	c	S
Sao Tome & Principe	a	P
"	b	P

Sao Tome & Principe	c	P
Senegal	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
Sierra Leone	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
South Africa	a	Pw
"	b	Pw
"	c	Pw
Sweden	b	S
Togo	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	P
United Kingdom	a	S
Zaire	a	P
"	b	P
"	c	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	