

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

A. **PROPOSAL:** Inclusion of Egretta garzetta garzetta (populations breeding in the Western Palearctic and Southern Africa) in Appendix II.

B. **PROPONENT:** Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

1. **Taxon**

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Ciconiiformes
1.3. Familia	Ardeidae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Egretta garzetta</u> (Linnaeus) 1758 ssp. <u>garzetta</u>

1.5. Common names

English:	Little Egret
Spanish:	Garceta Comun
French:	Aigrette garzette

2. **Biological data**

2.1. Distribution

Only the nominate subspecies occurs. This breeds widely across southern Eurasia and in Africa south of the Sahara, and winters in southern Europe, the Middle East and Africa south to the equator. Most populations breeding in subsaharan Africa are mainly sedentary, but the population breeding in Southern Africa is migratory.

2.2. Population

Three main groups of migrants are recognized; these mix extensively with sedentary populations on the winter grounds.

- South & West European/North African breeders (wintering mainly West Africa): 60,000; increasing (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Black Sea/Caspian/Middle East breeders (wintering mainly Northeast and East Africa): In the range 25,000-100,000 (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Southern Africa: Population size and trends unknown.

Numbers were much reduced by persecution for the plume trade in the 19th century, but as a result of protection this century, numbers have recovered and the species has expanded its range in Europe. Now fairly common in Europe; unpublished data suggest that the total breeding population in Europe is currently between 31,000 and 55,000 pairs. The species has increased in France, Italy and the Iberian Peninsula (del Hoyo et al. 1992). However, rather local and uncommon as a breeding species in North Africa. Little information is available on numbers in Southwest Asia; the breeding population in Iran was estimated at 800 pairs in the early 1970s, and that in Israel at 2,000 pairs in 1980. Several thousand birds remain throughout the winter in Southwest Asia, mainly in Iran, Iraq and Saudi Arabia; over 3,200 were recorded during the Asian Waterfowl Census of January 1992 (Perennou & Mundkur 1992).

Trends in the Southwest Asian population are unknown.

Little information is available on the numbers of E. garzetta breeding in Southern Africa, and the northern limits of the wintering distribution of this migratory population are unknown.

2.3. Habitat

Occurs in a wide variety of wetland habitats with shallow fresh, brackish or saline water, including margins of rivers and lakes, marshes, floodplains, rice fields, irrigated areas, salt-pans, sandy beaches, mud-flats and mangroves; occasionally in dry fields, even following cattle. Nests on the ground, or in reed-beds, bushes or trees, often in large colonies with other species of Ardeidae (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

2.4. Migrations

Birds breeding in the Western Palearctic and southern Africa are partially migratory, with the Western Palearctic populations wintering around the Mediterranean, in the Middle East and especially tropical Africa. The northern limits of the wintering distribution of the birds breeding in Southern Africa are unknown. All populations perform extensive post-breeding dispersals. Migratory populations are prone to overshooting in spring (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

Like other white egrets, heavily persecuted for the plume trade in the late 19th century. Locally, human disturbance at nesting colonies can be a problem.

3.2. Habitat destruction

There has been widespread loss and degradation of wetland habitats throughout the range of the species. This seems to have had little, if any, impact on numbers, as the species is readily able to adapt to man-made wetlands, especially rice fields and irrigation ponds, and accepts a wide range of nesting sites.

3.3. Indirect threats

No information.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

Some hunting of adults for food probably still occurs, especially in parts of Southwest Asia, but the numbers taken are likely to be small.

4. Protection status and needs

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, protected under national legislation in Angola, Botswana, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, Uganda and Zambia; partially protected as a game species in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Sudan and Togo.

4.2. International protection status

Egretta garzetta is listed in Appendix III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) for Ghana. It 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 populations in question are considered to have a favourable conservation status, and are not in need of any additional special protection measures at the present time.

5. Range States

See attached table.

6. Comments from Range States

7. Additional remarks

8. References

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- 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.
- Hancock, J. & Elliott, H. (1978). The Herons of the World. London Editions, London.
- 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>Egretta garzetta garzetta</i>		
Population		
(a) S & W Europe/N & W Africa		
(b) Black Sea/SW Asia/NE & E Africa		
(c) Southern Africa		
State	Pop.	Status
Albania	a	S
Algeria	a	W
Angola	a	W
Armenia	b	S
Azerbaijan	b	S
Bahrain	b	Wp
Benin	a	W
Bosnia & Herzegovina	a	S
Botswana	c	Sw
Bulgaria	a	S
"	b	S
Burkina Faso	a	W
Burundi	c	?
Cameroon	a	W
Central African Republic	a	W
"	b	W
Chad	a	W
"	b	W
Cote d'Ivoire	a	W
Croatia	a	S
Djibouti	b	W
Egypt	b	Wr
Equatorial Guinea	a	W
Ethiopia	b	W
France	a	S
Gabon	a	W
Gambia	a	W
Ghana	a	W
Greece	a	S
Guinea	a	W
Guinea-Bissau	a	W

Hungary	a	S
Iran	b	Ws
Iraq	b	W
Israel	b	R
Italy	a	S
Jordan	b	W
Kazakhstan	b	S
Kenya	c	?
Kuwait	b	Pw
Lebanon	b	R
Lesotho	c	S
Liberia	a	W
Libya	a	W
"	b	W
Macedonia	a	S
Malawi	c	W
Mali	a	W
Mauritania	a	W
Moldova	b	S
"	a	S
Morocco	a	Wr
Mozambique	c	Ws
Namibia	c	Sw
Niger	a	W
Nigeria	a	W
Poland	a	Wsr
Qatar	b	P
Romania	a	S
"	b	S
Russian Federation	b	S
Rwanda	c	?
Saudi Arabia	b	Wp
Senegal	a	W
Sierra Leone	a	W
Slovenia	a	S
Somalia	b	W
"	c	?
South Africa	c	S

Spain	a	Swr
Sudan	b	W
Swaziland	c	S
Tanzania	c	?
Togo	a	W
Tunisia	a	Wr
Turkey	b	Wsr
Turkmenistan	b	S
Uganda	c	?
Ukraine	b	S
"	a	S
United Arab Emirates	b	P
Uzbekistan	b	S
Yugoslavia	a	S
Zaire	c	?
Zambia	c	W
Zimbabwe	c	Ws

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	