

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Rallus aquaticus aquaticus and Rallus aquaticus korejewi (Western Palearctic 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	Gruiformes
1.3. Familia	Rallidae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Rallus aquaticus</u> Linnaeus 1758 ssp. <u>aquaticus</u> and <u>korejewi</u>
1.5. Common names	
English:	Water Rail
Spanish:	Rascon
French:	Rale d'eau

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Three subspecies occur. R. a. hibernans is confined to Iceland where it is mainly resident. The nominate subspecies breeds widely across West Eurasia; northern and eastern populations are migratory, wintering south to North Africa, while western and southern populations are mainly sedentary. R. a. korejewi breeds from Iran eastwards through Transcaspia to Pakistan and northwest India, and winters south to lower Iraq. There is some overlap between the two subspecies on their winter quarters in lower Iraq.

2.2. Population

Only two migratory populations are identifiable.

- Europe/North Africa (aquaticus): In the range 100,000-1,000,000; stable (Rose & Scott 1993).

- Southwest Asia (mainly korejewi): Unknown (over 10,000).

Unpublished data suggest that the total breeding population in Europe is between 100,000 and 450,000 pairs. There appears to have been little change in numbers in Europe in recent decades, except locally as a result of habitat loss. The species increased in Sweden in the first half of the present century, but has apparently declined there in recent years. An increase has also been reported in Finland, at the extreme northern edge of the species' range. No information is available on trends in the Southwest Asian population.

2.3. Habitat

Frequents freshwater swamps, bogs, reed-beds, fens and other wet areas with cover of coarse marsh plants, with or without shrubby growths of

alder, willow etc. Also found along the swampy margins of lakes, rivers and ponds. Outside the breeding season, often found in small to tiny wetlands such as overgrown ditches, farm ponds, clay pits, gravel pits, peat workings and sewage farms. Locally occurs on tidal beaches with sea-weed in rock pools (Cramp & Simmons 1980; Ripley 1977).

2.4. Migrations

The nominate subspecies is mainly resident in the North Sea countries, Southwest Europe, the Mediterranean Basin, Turkey and southern Russia, but is migratory or partially migratory elsewhere. Only small numbers of birds winter in southern Scandinavia and Germany, and the species is exceptional in winter further east. The migratory populations of northern and eastern Europe winter in the British Isles and south to the Mediterranean Basin (including North Africa), the Near East, Black Sea and Caucasus. West Asian breeders (korejewi) are also partially migratory, wintering within or somewhat to the south of their breeding range (Cramp & Simmons 1980).

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

The species is legally hunted in France, Italy and Morocco, and probably also in eastern Europe, North Africa and West Asia, but the numbers taken are likely to be very small.

3.2. Habitat destruction

Much suitable habitat has been lost as a result of drainage and reclamation of wetlands throughout the species' range, and this must have caused many local decreases and extinctions, but no major declines or contractions in range have been reported.

3.3. Indirect threats

Possibly at risk from the contamination of wetlands with pesticides and other chemicals, but details lacking.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

Some legal hunting as a game species in France, Italy and Morocco, and perhaps also in eastern Europe, North Africa and West Asia.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC except France and Italy where a hunting season is established. Partially protected as a game species in Morocco.

4.2. International protection status

Rallus aquaticus is listed in Appendix III (protected fauna) of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), and is also listed in Annex II/2 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

- Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds). (1980). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.2: Hawks to Bustards. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- Ripley, S.D. (1977). Rails of the World. Godine, Boston, U.S.A.
- 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>Rallus aquaticus</i> (ssp <i>aquaticus</i> & <i>korejewi</i>)		
Population		
(a) Europe/N Africa (<i>aquaticus</i>)		
(b) W Siberia/SW Asia (<i>korejewi</i>)		
State	Pop.	Status
Albania	a	R
Algeria	a	Wr
Armenia	a	R
Austria	a	Sr
Azerbaijan	a	R
Bahrain	b	Ws
Belarus	a	S
Belgium	a	Wr
Bosnia & Herzegovina	a	Sw
Bulgaria	a	Srw
Croatia	a	Sw
Cyprus	a	W
Czech Republic	a	S
Denmark	a	Srw
Egypt	a	Rw
Estonia	a	S
Finland	a	S
France	a	Wr
Georgia	a	R
Germany	a	Sr
Greece	a	Rw
Hungary	a	S
Iran	b	Wsr
Iraq	b	W
"	a	W
Israel	a	W
Italy	a	Rw
Jordan	a	W
Kazakhstan	b	S
Kuwait	b	W
Latvia	a	S
Libya	a	W

Liechtenstein	a	S
Lithuania	a	S
Luxembourg	a	R
Macedonia	a	Rw
Moldova	a	S
Monaco	a	R
Morocco	a	Wr
Netherlands	a	Rw
Norway	a	Rw
Portugal	a	Wr
Qatar	b	Pw?
Romania	a	Sr
Russian Federation	a	Sr
San Marino	a	R
Saudi Arabia	b	R
Slovakia	a	S
Slovenia	a	Sw
Spain	a	Rw
Sweden	a	Sr
Switzerland	a	Wr
Tunisia	a	Wr
Turkey	a	Rw
Turkmenistan	b	W
Ukraine	a	Sr
United Arab Emirates	b	W
United Kingdom	a	Wr
Uzbekistan	b	Sw
Yugoslavia	a	Sr

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	