



**BirdLife International contributions in  
tackling illegal killing, taking and trade  
of birds**

**MIKT3**

**Rome May 2018**

## Progress since MIKT2

- The BirdLife partnership remains fully committed to supporting national authorities to achieve zero tolerance
- Illegal killing, taking and trade remains a significant issue in many European and Mediterranean countries
- What have we been working on since MIKT2?
  - Global Flyways summit held in Abu Dhabi in 2018 with IKB session and outcomes
  - Fund-raising for a raft of new projects in priority countries with high levels of IKB with activities in collaboration with other NGOs and with government authorities
  - A campaign 'flight for survival' to try and raise further funds to tackle IKB within the flyway
  - Reviewing IKB in other regions –Arabian peninsular/ Iran/ Iraq and beginning SE Asia (new task force in Asia modelled on MIKT)



# BirdLife Projects in the Mediterranean Region

BirdLife Partnership works in 25+ Mediterranean and peri-Mediterranean countries

Our projects have raised significant funding from the EU, UN and private foundations to tackle IKB.

In 2017 we launched an international consortium of NGOs (WWF, IUCN Med, Euronatur, VCF and Tour du Valat) to work together to reduce illegal killing in the Med.

Current projects:

- LIFE Against Bird Crime. Delivering the EU Biodiversity Strategy: Awareness and Capacity Building against Bird Crime in Priority Flyway Countries (Greece, Cyprus, Italy, Croatia)
- Safe Flyways: Ending Illegal Killing in the Med (Egypt, Lebanon, Greece, Cyprus, Italy, + 19 other med countries)
- UNDP/GEF Migratory Soaring Bird project (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Yemen, Saudi Arabia)
- Ending Illegal Trapping (Malta, Cyprus and Italy)
- Ending illegal Killing in Egypt

# Collaboration between BirdLife and national authorities

Projects follow a policy of zero tolerance to illegal killing, trapping and taking and broad work plans covering: policy, advocacy, communications and on-the-ground monitoring and enforcement e.g./:

- In Greece HOS is working together with the ministry in the Ionian Islands, currently working on an MoU to jointly tackle IKB
- In Italy LIPU has had excellent cooperation with the national enforcement agency and is seeing a significant reduction in IKB in the blackspots
- Cyprus has demonstrated the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder initiatives, BirdLife Cyprus in cooperation with RSPB and local enforcement agencies have succeeded in a 74% reduction of IKB in the Cyprus blackspots (SBAs)

# BirdLife partner perspectives on national efforts to tackle IKB

- In some countries some positive signs of high level political figures giving this issue high priority
- Where additional resources/ equipment/ enforcement personnel deployed better results
- In some countries more effort being made to change the cultural acceptance of IKB through education
- Some national IKB databases set up
- Some cases being successfully prosecuted
- Some increase in penalties
- Some reports of improved collaboration between NGO and authorities
- In many cases the legislation re: IKB is good
- Some cases of quick response by authorities to reports
- Some genuine successes eg/ SBA of Cyprus, Italy



# BirdLife partner perspectives on national efforts to tackle IKB

- Resources designated to tackle IKB are far too low (funding, human resources, equipment, vehicles).
- Law enforcement weak with no dedicated force and other priorities
- Sporadic enforcement activity with short term effect on markets, business as usual inbetween
- Lack of training, staff turnover when new administration
- Penalties too minor and severity of crime needs to be increased, low risk of getting caught=no deterrent
- Follow up on violation cases to reach prosecution is often weak and lengthy
- Reliance on NGOs to detect and report crime and little surveillance
- Cultural traditions surrounding IKB proving hard to change
- Some legislative changes have open up loopholes and the possibility of abuse
- Slow response to reports of IKB
- Little progress in producing national action plans/ structures in many countries

# Needs identified by BirdLife partners from MIKT/ Bern

- Support to develop national action plans and framework for multi-stakeholder implementation including national to local government
- Support to authorities to get adequate priority/ funding allocated from central government to IKB
- Training for judiciary, prosecutors, law enforcers on IKB
- Increased cross-border training, exchange and collaboration (eg/ organised study visits and sharing of best practices)
- Encouraging greater collaboration on cross-border illegal killing
- Practical training in wildlife crime investigation so that info can be used in the legal process

# Scoreboard – 1<sup>st</sup> assessment

- A real innovation, full support, potential to help improve resourcing issues
- Good to see a large number of responses, some key geographic gaps to be filled and national level scoreboard results need to be shared with all of MIKT
- Some responses not reflecting reality partners report on the ground limiting value of scoreboard assessment as a baseline.
- Proportion of IKB occurrences detected is low so in interpretation low numbers of cases do not = low levels of wildlife crime.
- Some teething issues with process – all members and observers to the MIKT/ Bern task force should be informed simultaneously, results should be released well in advance of MIKT so observers and other govts can really discuss
- Some authorities consulted all relevant stakeholders, some did not – as with national action plans and other aspects of IKB assessing progress should be multi-stakeholder – extending capacity.

Some changes needed to make it easier to share draft scoreboard responses among stakeholders

# Monitoring IKB – tracking our progress

- Support the scoreboard process as a means of self assessment/ form of monitoring
- Section A of the scoreboard aims to track the scale of the issue nationally monitoring this is important to understand whether all of the effort is bearing fruit
- Where there's a national action plan or strategy in place its important to know whether its achieving its aims
- IKB is a live issue, perpetrators are agile and may change tack, location, species focus depending on market forces and indeed enforcement action – monitoring essential to stay on top of it



# Guidelines on monitoring IKB

- Checklist of the minimum steps to consider
- Sampling design and survey method considerations
- Recommended methods for monitoring different types of IKB with case studies, examples of protocols etc
- Lists some of the key references and relevant sources of additional information. Use of drones to monitor IKB
- Case studies including use of new technology – drones, DNA, satellite tagging, covert surveillance. automated tools to filter online info on IKB
- Happy to see content shared/ adapted etc. for use by other stakeholders – update underway



Monitoring of the illegal mist-netting of birds in Cyprus © BirdLife Cyprus



# MIKT – working together to tackle obstacles to zero tolerance

- Many national authorities experience impediments to progress:
- These issues are real and solving them is critical to achieving zero tolerance in practice
- This task force is the ideal forum for national authorities to discuss these issues and possible solutions openly
- Some key countries not currently participating may greatly benefit from doing so – what can we all do to help engage these?
- Need to identify training needs and offers – actively learn from one another



