



Joint Meeting of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds and the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean
(Online, 9 to 11 June 2021)

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OVERVIEW REPORT FROM THE CMS SECRETARIAT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK 2016-2020 FOR THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
(Prepared by the CMS Secretariat)

Summary:

This document outlines the main activities undertaken by the CMS Secretariat in relation to the Programme of Work 2016-2020 for the MIKT since the last MIKT meeting in 2019 in Rome.



The European Union was recognized as Champion Plus for their generous support and commitment towards addressing Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean for the period 2018 - 2023. This activity has been funded with the contribution granted by the European Commission under the Migratory Species Champion Programme and through the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC Programme) Cooperation Agreements with UNEP.



**Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of
Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT)**



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PROGRAMME OF WORK 2016-2020 FOR THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE ON
ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN**

*Prepared February 2021
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A. Introduction

1. This document provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the Members of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) with direct involvement of the CMS Secretariat and the Coordinator of the MIKT as part of the implementation of the MIKT Programme of Work (POW) 2016-2020, adopted during the Meeting of the CMS Task Force held from 12 to 15 July 2016 in Cairo, Egypt.
2. This POW contributed to the achievement and implementation of:
 - the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly goal 15 related to biodiversity which sets a target to take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products;
 - the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity 2011-2020, and its Aichi targets, particularly Target 12;
 - the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023;
 - the CMS Resolution 11.16 (Rev. COP13) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*;
 - the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 (COM (2011) 244) and, in particular, its target 1 “Fully implement the Birds and Habitats Directives”.
3. As of May 2021, the **Membership of the Task Force** consists of 22 CMS Contracting Parties. Additionally, three Interested Parties and one Non-Party are Observers to the MIKT. Twelve multilateral environmental agreements (represented by their Secretariats), organizations and networks, and nine non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are Observers to MIKT. Focal points in eight advisory bodies provide advice to the MIKT as needed. A list of all Members and Observers is available on the [CMS MIKT website](#)
4. **Meetings of the Task Force**

The [first Meeting of the Intergovernmental Task Force](#) (MIKT) was held from 12 to 15 July 2016 in Cairo, Egypt. During that meeting the [modus operandi](#) of the MIKT was adopted and Governments and observers agreed on the need for stricter penalties, increased surveillance and improved law enforcement, committing to a zero tolerance approach to curb the massive illegal killing of migratory birds in the Mediterranean. As a result, the [Cairo Declaration](#) on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean Region as well as the [Programme of Work](#) (POW) 2016- 2020 were adopted.

Following the adoption of the POW at the MIKT meeting in Cairo, two more meetings took place. These were held as joint meetings between the CMS MIKT and the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (SFPs).

The [second Meeting of MIKT](#) (and 1st Joint Meeting with Bern Convention SFPs) took place in Sliema, Malta in June 2017. One of the main achievements of this meeting was the development and endorsement of the draft Scoreboard to Assess the Progress in Combating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Wild Birds (the Scoreboard).

The [third Meeting of MIKT](#) (and 2nd Joint Meeting with Bern Convention SFPs) took place in Rome, in May 2019. At this meeting, the members and observers agreed on a joint strategic approach of CMS MIKT and Bern Convention to address IKB in the post-2020 period, and elaborated a draft for a strategic framework, which later led to the adoption of the [Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region](#). The overarching long-term goal of the Rome Strategic Plan is the eradication of illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds (IKB) within the geographic extent of the Bern Convention and CMS MIKT. The Goal of the Plan for 2030 is a 50% reduction to the scale and scope of IKB compared to the 2020 baseline.

The 3rd Joint Meeting of MIKT with Bern Convention SFPs is organized to take place online between 9-11 June 2021.

5. CMS Conference of the Parties (COP) Resolutions and Decisions

The relevant Resolution for the work of the MIKT is [Resolution 11.16](#) (Rev. COP13) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*. It was first adopted by CMS COP 11 in 2014, and was reviewed by COP12 (in 2017) and COP13 (in 2020), to include relevant developments, reflect amendments or new documents in the process and update the content to correctly depict the status quo of the initiative.

In addition, draft decisions related to the work of MIKT were submitted to and adopted by the CMS Conference of the Parties at its 12th meeting (COP12, Manila, 2017) and its 13th meeting (COP13, Gandhinagar, India, 2020). [The Decisions](#) (13.27-13.31) are addressed to Parties, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), NGOs, other stakeholders and the Secretariat in aspects related to the implementation of the MIKT POW 2016-2020, the Scoreboard and the Rome Strategic Plan.

6. Geographic Scope of the Programme of Work 2016-2020

The countries within the geographic scope of MIKT and the Bern Convention are 57 countries & the European Union:

The countries in **bold** are Members of the MIKT, and the countries in *italics* are Observers to the MIKT. **Albania, Algeria**, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, **Croatia, Cyprus**, Czech Republic, Denmark, **Egypt**, Estonia, **European Union**, Finland, **France**, Georgia, *Germany*, **Greece**, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, **Israel, Italy, Jordan**, Latvia, **Lebanon, Libya**, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, **Malta**, Moldova, **Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco**, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, *Portugal*, North Macedonia, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, **Slovenia, Spain**, Sweden, Switzerland, **Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey**, Ukraine, **United Kingdom**.

7. The Programme of Work 2016-2020 is divided into the following main thematic areas of work:

- 1. Overarching issues
- 2. Legal and enforcement aspects
- 3. Conservation and monitoring
- 4. Education and public awareness

B. Reporting in relation to the Programme of Work Thematic Areas:

Thematic Area 1. Overarching Issues:

8. The overarching issues of Objective 1 include: 1.1) encouraging countries to develop National Action Plans to address IKB where it is deemed useful, 1.2) regularly reporting the IKB situation in each country, 1.3) addressing IKB in trouble spot areas to assist developing appropriate local solutions and 1.4) developing a Scoreboard for measuring progress.

The following main activities are reported:

1.4 Measure Progress

Action 1.4.1 Create a scoreboard to measure and allow benchmarking of concrete progress on eradication of IKB at national level

9. One of the priorities of the POW was to adopt a method of measuring progress and allowing benchmarking in relation to the Programme of Work 2016-2020. This was achieved with the adoption of the [Scoreboard](#) to assess the progress in combating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds (IKB). The draft Scoreboard was developed and endorsed for the purpose of monitoring and as a voluntary self-assessment tool for countries to measure their own progress in addressing IKB at the Joint Meeting of the MIKT and the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds (SFPs), held from the 22 to 23 June 2017, in Sliema, Malta. Subsequently, the final draft of the Scoreboard was adopted by [CMS COP12](#) Annex 1 to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12), and by the 37th meeting of the Standing Committee (Strasbourg, 2017).

The Scoreboard provides a voluntary self-assessment method for the systematic gathering of appropriate information at a national level, and which would enable States to compare results at regional and international level as appropriate, and identification and sharing of any methods that have been particularly effective or shared challenges or deficiencies that require further concerted action to be addressed. The assessment aims to enable States to review their progress toward the implementation of the Tunis Action Plan and the MIKT POW periodically. The Scoreboard assessments have already been undertaken in 2018, 2020 and will be done every three years thereafter within the geographical scope of the Contracting Parties of the Bern Convention and the MIKT.

In 2018, 30 countries completed the Scoreboard to cover the period 2016-2017, and 24 countries in the 2020 assessment to cover the period 2018-2019. Preliminary results of the compilation of the [responses to the 2018 Scoreboard](#) were discussed at the 39th Bern Convention Standing Committee Meeting in December 2019, and [the responses to the 2020 Scoreboard](#) at the 40th Bern Convention Standing Committee Meeting in December 2020. An update of the analysis of the 2020 answers to the Scoreboard, prepared by the CMS Secretariat, will be presented at the MIKT meeting in June 2021. The updated analysis includes Belarus, Greece, Malta, Serbia, Spain, and the United Kingdom bringing the total number of countries which completed the Scoreboard in 2018 or 2020 to 35.

Thematic Area 2. Legal and Enforcement Issues:

10. The overarching issues of Objective 2 include: 2.1) ensuring that national legislation complies with international and EU law where applicable and is effective in addressing national challenges related to eradication of IKB, 2.2) providing the judiciary sector with clear sentencing guidelines, 2.3) ensuring that legislation is properly implemented and enforced, 2.4) strengthening regional cooperation across law enforcement chains and 2.5) building capacity along enforcement chain and judiciary.

2.4. Strengthen regional cooperation across law enforcement chains

Action 2.4.2 Facilitate development of pan-Mediterranean portal/database or other tools for the exchange of enforcement-related information at pan Mediterranean level, including through engagement with and use of existing communication channels for environmental enforcement professionals.

11. To facilitate the collaboration among Members and Observers of the Task Force, and potential contribution from experts, a section dedicated to the Task Force on IKB has been created under the CMS Scientific Council Workspace, an online platform managed by the CMS Secretariat. The Workspace can be used inter-sessionally by Members, Observers and invited experts and is moderated by the MIKT Coordinator.

2.5. Capacity building along enforcement chain and judiciary
 Action 2.5.2 Organise regional and national training seminars on IKB on environmental crime for police officers, inspectors, rangers, prosecutors and judges

Workshop

12. A workshop for Government Prosecutors on the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade (IKB) of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean Region was organized by the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE) and the CMS Secretariat. The workshop was hosted by the ENPE Life Project “Wildlife Crime” Working Group in cooperation with CMS with support of the European Commission at the National Centre for Environmental Education (CENEAM) in Valsaín, Segovia, Spain, from 9 to 11 May 2018. The workshop was aimed at investigators, prosecutors and specialists involved in the enforcement of the laws combating environmental crimes against migratory birds in Europe and brought together 37 delegates from 17 countries. The training covered presentations on the research into the size and extent of the problem, the various motives of offenders, the techniques and equipment used in illegal killing of birds (IKB), the expertise and international assistance available, the EU Wildlife Trade (CITES) Regulations and, most importantly, case studies of significant prosecutions and investigations into IKB from different countries, mainly from the Mediterranean Region.

The report of the workshop was published on the ENPE and CMS websites, including the dedicated [website](#) to the workshop on the CMS website. As an output of this workshop, a training package was compiled in English by ENPE and CMS and was translated into French, Spanish, Italian, Greek and Arabic and disseminated to prosecutors and investigators who participated in the workshop in 2018 and others that expressed interest. The aim of the package was to transfer the messages and findings of the workshop to the national level.

The very positive feedback included several participants declaring that they would develop and propose changes to their national legislation to the relevant ministries and authorities in their countries to increase the effectiveness in the prosecution of IKB. The delegates were also in favour of intensifying international cooperation beyond the European network. MIKT was perceived as a very successful initiative which can play a vital role in this process, and the successful cooperation with the Bern Convention was highlighted.

Collaboration with partners

13. A collaboration with INTERPOL, Observer to MIKT, was envisaged for 2018 and 2019. The collaboration with INTERPOL’s Environmental Security Programme (ENS), was envisaged to address the illegal trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean through various activities related to advocacy, capacity-building and information exchange and law enforcement. Several joint training activities had been planned for 2018 onwards. Following changes in personnel at INTERPOL, however, the cooperation has been put on hold for the time being.

Thematic Area 4. Education and Public Awareness:

14. *The overarching issues of Objective 4 include: 4.1) improving hunter education processes and raising awareness at national level by working together with hunting organisations and the wider hunting community, 4.2) raising awareness within local communities on the environmental, social and economic impacts of IKB, 4.3) raising public awareness and 4.4) encouraging countries to develop national communication strategies addressing national stakeholders to implement national action plans.*

4.3 Public Awareness

Action 4.3.1 Design, produce and disseminate a multi-media toolkit on eradication of IKB including a documentary

15. The Secretariat has used the CMS media channels to disseminate information on various platforms. MIKT has been active on social media, using CMS channels (@BonnConvention) to post updates on the work of the Task Force, for example, including daily tweets during the ENPE-CMS Workshop for Government Prosecutors on IKB, held in Spain. In addition, the Secretariat made efforts towards raising awareness by posting relevant news on digital media related IKB in the Mediterranean region in several languages.

The webpage dedicated to the Task Force under the CMS website has been updated as relevant documents, studies or news became available. Dedicated websites were created to support communication on the Workshop for Government Prosecutors on IKB in the Mediterranean Region and the MIKT meetings.

4.3. Public awareness

Action 4.3.2 Ensure coordination with communication efforts of other international conventions and platforms

16. *Participation and contribution to meetings and conferences*

The work of MIKT has been presented in a number of conferences and meetings.

The MIKT Coordinator presented the work of the Task Force at the Technical Meeting of Experts on IUCN World Conservation Congress on "Crimes against the Environment" in July 2018.

The Coordinator attended the meeting of the "EU Roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping, and trade of birds", organized by the European Commission in September 2018.

In December 2018, the MIKT Coordinator attended the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) implementation workshop and the Tenth Meeting of Partners to the Partnership for the East Asian – Australasian Flyway, EAAFP MOP10. In the meetings, the MIKT Coordinator presented the work of the Task Force, best practices, lessons learned and possibilities for replicating the format and activities in the EAAF, according to the mandate of CMS Resolution 11.16 (Rev. COP12) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*.

In March 2019, the Coordinator presented the work of MIKT at the Flyways Conservation Planning Workshop, organized by BirdLife International, where the Scoreboard was presented as a monitoring tool that could be replicated in other regions beyond the Mediterranean to assess the progress in combating IKB at the national level. The Coordinator gave a presentation remotely.

In June 2019, the Coordinator participated in a Workshop on Monitoring and Communicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB), organized by BirdLife International and BirdLife partners, Euronatur and the MAVA Foundation.

In March 2021, the MIKT Coordinator participated and gave a presentation on the Rome Strategic Plan in a Workshop on IKB National Action Plans organised by BirdLife International which took place online.

17. *Presentations at CMS COP meetings*

The MIKT work was presented at the COP13 of CMS which took place from 15 to 22 February 2020 in Gandhinagar, India, in the frame of a report contained in Document [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.26.1.1](#), and a [side event](#) held on Wednesday, 19 February 2020.

18. *Presentations and side events at other conferences*

The work of MIKT was showcased at well-attended side events at major conferences, such as the Ramsar COP13 in October 2018 in Dubai, two side events at CBD COP14 in November 2018 in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, and the AEWA MOP7 in December 2018 in Durban, South Africa. The Secretariat collaborated closely with Parties and partners to ensure the contribution of MIKT in relevant discussions and raise the profile of the Task Force.

Recommended actions:

- 19.** The CMS MIKT members and the Bern Convention Network of SFPs on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds are recommended to:
- a) take note of this document;
 - b) review this document, as appropriate.