

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 bergii (African and Southwest Asian 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 bergii</u> Lichtenstein 1823 ssp. <u>bergii</u> , <u>thalassinus</u> and <u>velox</u>
1.5. Common names	
English:	Great Crested-Tern (Swift Tern)
Spanish:	Charran de Berg
French:	Sterne huppe

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Three subspecies occur. The nominate race breeds on the coasts of southern Africa (Namibia, South Africa and Mozambique) and in Madagascar. The birds breeding in Madagascar (220 pairs) appear to be mainly sedentary, but those breeding in Southern Africa are at least partly migratory within Southern Africa. S. b. thalassinus breeds on islands off the coast of Tanzania and in the Seychelles, Aldabra and Rodriguez, and winters along the East African coast north to Kenya and Somalia. S. b. velox breeds in the Red Sea and from the Persian Gulf east to Southeast Asia. Populations breeding from the Persian Gulf eastwards appear to be sedentary or dispersive rather than migratory, but the population breeding in the Red Sea is partly migratory, wintering south along the East African coast to Kenya.

2.2. Population

Three migratory populations are recognized.

- Southern Africa (bergii): 15,000 (Rose & Scott 1993).
- East Africa (thalassinus): 1,200 (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Red Sea/East Africa (velox): Probably in the range 10,000-25,000.

In Southern Africa, approximately 4,600 pairs breed in a number of colonies between Luderitz and Algoa Bay, South Africa (Urban et al. 1986). The population of S. b. thalassinus in East Africa is apparently tiny; only a few breeding sites are known, and there may be only 300 to 500 pairs, mostly on Latham Island in Tanzania. In the Red Sea and Northeast Africa, there are at least 5,300 pairs excluding Ethiopia, where the population is unknown. Some 400 pairs breed in the Suakin Archipelago in Sudan, and 200 pairs at Zeila in northwestern Somalia (Urban et al. 1986). No information is available on trends in any of

these three populations.

2.3. Habitat

Strictly marine, breeding along subtropical and tropical coasts. Nests in dense colonies on low-lying sandy, rocky or coral islands, or on bare sand-spits, commonly in association with S. bengalensis. Forages mainly inshore along sandy, rocky or coral coasts and in estuaries, but also well offshore; commonly rests on sandy beaches, sand-banks and rocks (Cramp 1985; Urban et al. 1986).

2.4. Migrations

A partial migrant, with some birds remaining around their breeding areas throughout the year but the majority dispersing along coasts. In the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, numbers are much reduced between September and May. Birds from the Namibian and South African colonies move along the coast to Mozambique; those from the Zambezi Delta colony probably move south to Beira and Natal; some of those breeding in Tanzania move north to Kenya and Somalia; and those breeding in the Red Sea spread throughout the Red Sea and south along the Indian Ocean coast to Kenya (Urban et al. 1986).

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

The collection of eggs for human consumption and casual disturbance by fishermen and tourists may pose a threat at some colonies, but details are lacking.

3.2. Habitat destruction

No information.

3.3. Indirect threats

The species is possibly at risk from oil pollution.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

Possibly some collection of eggs for human consumption.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland and Tanzania.

4.2. International protection status

None known.

4.3. Additional protection needs

The East African population of Sterna bergii thalassinus is listed in the category 'Threatened' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because it is a biogeographical population which is thought to number less than 10,000 individuals. The population of Sterna bergii bergii breeding in Southern Africa and the population of Sterna bergii velox breeding in the Red Sea and along the East African coast are listed in the category 'Localized' because they are biogeographical populations which, although numerically stable or increasing, are restricted to only a few key sites during a part or the whole of their annual cycles. 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.
- Gallagher, M.D., Scott, D.A., Ormond, R.F.G., Connor, R.J. & Jennings, M.C. (1984). The Distribution and Conservation of Seabirds Breeding on the Coasts and Islands of Iran and Arabia. In Croxall, P.J., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds), Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 421-456. ICBP Technical Publication No.2. ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.
- 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.

Taxon: <i>Sterna bergii</i> (ssp <i>bergii</i> , <i>thalassinus</i> & <i>velox</i>)		
Population		
(a) Southern Africa (ssp <i>bergii</i>)		
(b) East Africa (ssp <i>thalassinus</i>)		
(c) Red Sea/E Africa (ssp <i>velox</i>)		
State	Pop.	Status
Comoros	b	S
Djibouti	c	W
Egypt	c	Sr
Kenya	b	W
"	c	W
Mozambique	a	?
Namibia	a	?
Saudi Arabia	c	Sr
Seychelles	b	S
Somalia	b	W
"	c	Sr
South Africa	a	?
Sudan	c	Sr
Tanzania	b	Sw
Yemen	c	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	