



European  
Commission

**1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Intergovernmental Task  
Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of  
Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean  
12-15.7.2016, Cairo, Egypt**

# **EU roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of wildbirds & update on the EU Action Plan on Wildlife trafficking**

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# EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020

## Target 1 - Nature conservation

*To halt the deterioration in the status of all species and habitats covered by EU nature legislation and achieve a significant and measurable improvement in their status by 2020*

- Complete the establishment of the **Natura 2000** network and ensure **good management**
- Increase stakeholder **awareness** and **involvement** and **improve enforcement**
- Improve and streamline **monitoring** and reporting
- Ensure adequate **financing** of Natura 2000 sites

# 7EAP - “Living well, within the limits of our planet”

- **2020** timeframe, **2050** vision, **9** priority objectives
- Commitment by EU and its **Member States**

## THEMATIC OBJECTIVES:

- **Protect, conserve and enhance the EU's natural capital**  
**Fully implement the EU Biodiversity Strategy**
- **Green & competitive growth – low-carbon, resource-efficient economy**
- **Health & environment, human well-being**

## LOCAL, REGIONAL, GLOBAL DIMENSION:

- **Urban environment**
- **International**



## ENABLING FRAMEWORK:

- **Implementation**
- **Information, knowledge base**
- **Investment**
- **Integration, coherence**

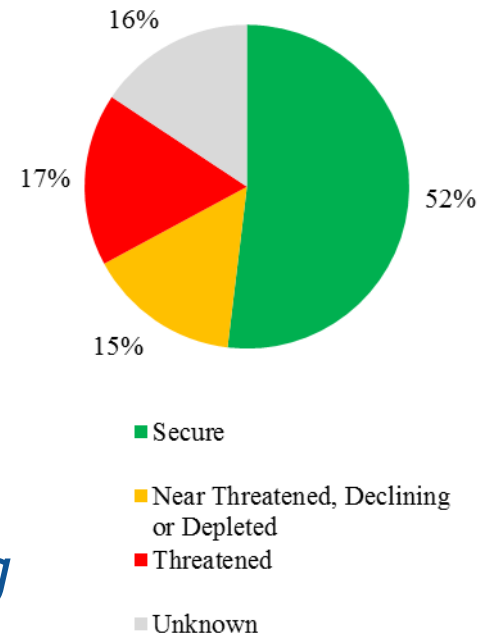


# EU population status of bird species

## Report on State of Nature in the EU, May 2015

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM:2015:219:FIN>

- *More than 500 bird species naturally present in the EU*
- *52% secure*
- *However, still 17% threatened and 15% near threatened, declining or depleted*



# EU Nature Legislation

## Birds and Habitats Directives

*These are our key implementation tools to achieve objectives of CMS family, Bern Convention, CBD*

### Birds Directive

- Birds Directive protects all wild birds species occurring in the territory of the EU (Art 1)
- Directive provides general system of protection (Art 5)
  - some species are hutable under sustainable conditions (Art 7)

*All Means, arrangement or methods used for large scale or non-selective killing **are prohibited** (Art 8)*

*Use of nets, glue, poisoned baits **are prohibited** (Annex IV)*



# Habitats Directive

- Requires designation of core site for protection of a number of habitat types and species covered by Habitats and Birds directive, including most important sites for migratory birds
- These sites form ecological network of nature areas  
→ European Natura 2000 network



- The implementation and enforcement of the EU nature legislation is the responsibility of the Member States (MS)
- Commission is the Guardian of the Treaties
  - **Commission is constantly monitoring/supporting MS enforcement efforts**
  - **Open EU Pilots/infringement cases on illegal killing of birds: France, Greece, Italy**



Commission financed a study in 2011: ***Stocktaking of the main problems and review of national enforcement mechanisms for tackling illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds in the EU***

([http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO\\_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/pubs/pdf/BIO_BirdsIllegalKilling.pdf) )

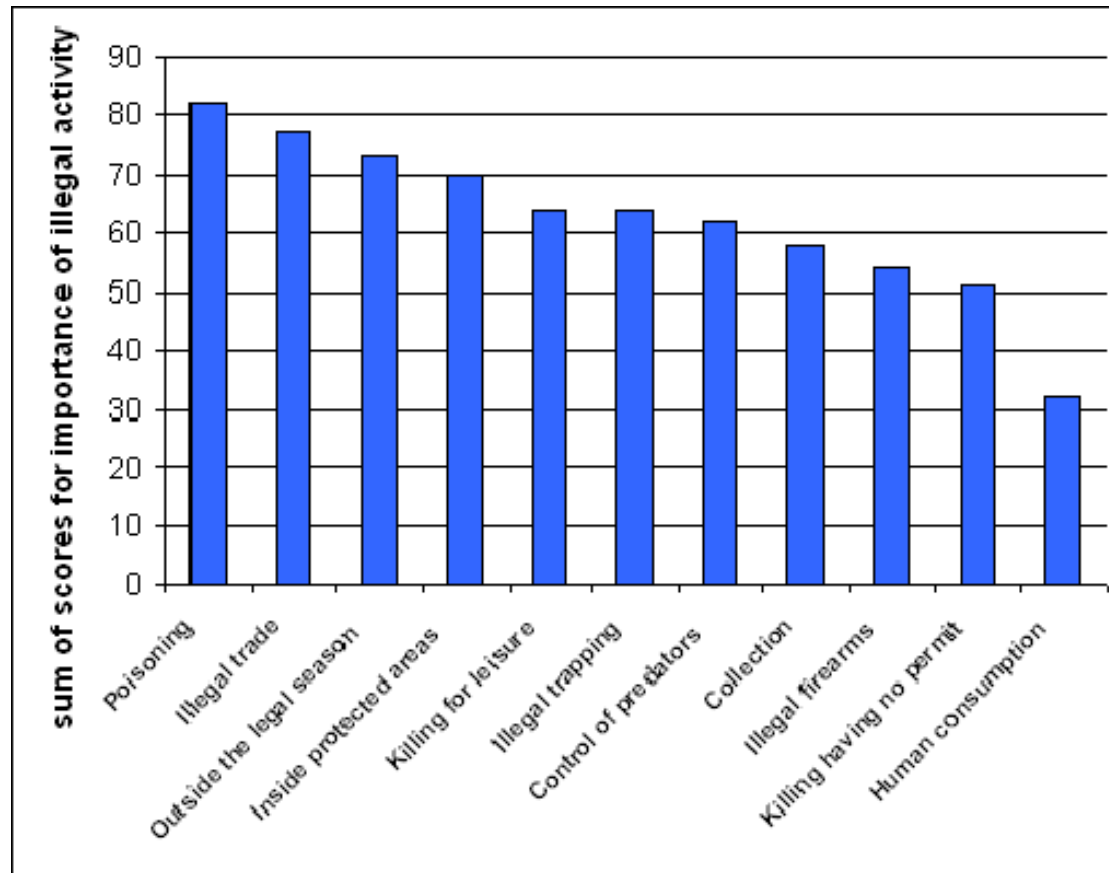
*Key findings:*

- Illegal birds killing/trapping: shooting, trapping, poisoning or other means
- May refer to killing/trapping in areas and/or the period during which the hunting/trapping is forbidden, using illegal methods for killing/trapping birds, voluntary poisoning of certain species, killing/shooting/trapping/poisoning of protected birds, use of illegal products that kill birds etc.
- The **main issues** identified in the EU are poisoning, illegal trapping, illegal bird trade, and killing for control of predators





## Ranking of illegal activities in order of reported importance BirdLife (2011)



# Controlling illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds (IKB) is a complex issue:

- hard to estimate the importance of these activities, as the recorded illegal activities may be only a fraction of real activity
- illegal activities are often very local
- Illegal poisoning activities are also difficult to quantify since the poisoned birds are rarely found
- Tackling IKB requires a combination of measures/skills (knowledge, awareness-raising, prevention, field action, prosecution/judiciary/penalties, co-operation ...)
- Long process - argument of "tradition"



# Larnaca declaration

*The European Conference on Illegal Killing of Birds, co-organised by the Council of Europe and the Game Fund of Cyprus (Ministry of Interior) in 2011*

called responsible stakeholders, governments, local communities, law enforcement agencies, nature conservation NGOs, including hunting associations, to unequivocally condemn all forms of illegal taking and trading in wild birds, to pledge **a zero tolerance** approach to illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds, and a full and proactive role in fighting against these illegal activities



# EU roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of wild birds

- initiated in 2012
- developed/updated in cooperation with Member States & stakeholders
- is part of the Tunis Action Plan 2013-2020 under the Bern Convention
- aims to list/monitor possible actions for the Commission, Member States and other concerned parties



- Roadmap is structured under 4 sections:

**1) Monitoring and data collection,**

**2) Information exchange, training and awareness-raising,**

**3) Enforcement and legal aspects, and**

**4) Prevention**



# Role of the European Commission in the Roadmap:

- 1) Raising awareness of the competent authorities and the civil society
- 2) Funding projects
- 3) Co-ordinating efforts at EU level
- 4) Processing data provided by Member States in the context of their reporting obligations or Commission's enquiries, and
- 5) Initiating legal procedure



# Commission actions - examples

- Standing issue at Ornis Committee (NADEG)
- Biannual meeting with stakeholders (FACE, Birdlife, CoE, Interpol, IMPEL, CMS/AEWA)
- Co-financing of LIFE projects (Nature, Information, Biodiversity, Integrated Projects)
- Species Action Plans (under drafting: Cinerous Vulture, Bearded Vulture, Turtle Dove)



- EC (DG Justice) financed the European Network against Environmental Crime (ENEC)  
& ENEC developed the *Proposal for EU Action Plan on Illegal Poisoning of Wildlife*
  - *EU Member States are encouraged to implement this plan*
- Financing of IMPEL\* activities (small targeted projects e.g. hunting tourism, joint inspections, developing system to share information with NGOs)
  - \*EU Network for the Enforcement and Implementation of Environmental Law





- Training of judges and prosecutors (new module on wildlife trafficking: *How to enforce EU Legislation on Biodiversity and Wildlife Trafficking*)
- EU Strategy on Raptors - drafting is on-going
- Analysis on-going to restrict
  - use of lead in shots in wetlands
  - Parallel procedure also for banning of lead in other terrestrial habitats and in fishing weights (ref. to AEWA and CMS resolutions)



- Financing for the Task Force on illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean region 2016-2018



# **BirdLife study 2015 'The Killing' lists the following TOP 10 IKB countries:**

- **Egypt 5.7 million/year**
- **Italy 5.6 million**
- **Syria 3.9 million**
- **Lebanon 2.6 million**
- **Cyprus 2.3 million**
- **Greece 0.7 million**
- **France 0.5 million**
- **Croatia 0.5 million**
- **Libya 0.5 million**
- **Albania 0.3 million**





**For more information, please consult:**

**[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/index_en.htm)**

**Directly to the Roadmap:**

**[http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal\\_killing.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/illegal_killing.htm)**

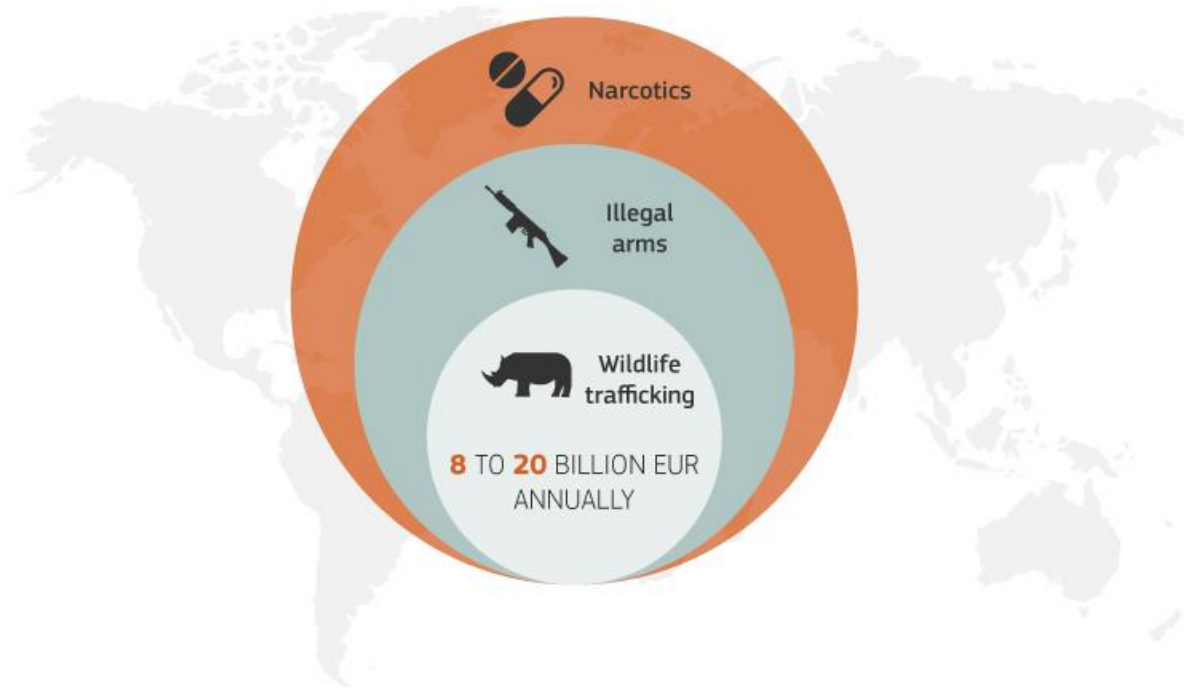


# **The new EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking**

# THE SCALE OF WILDLIFE TRAFFICKING

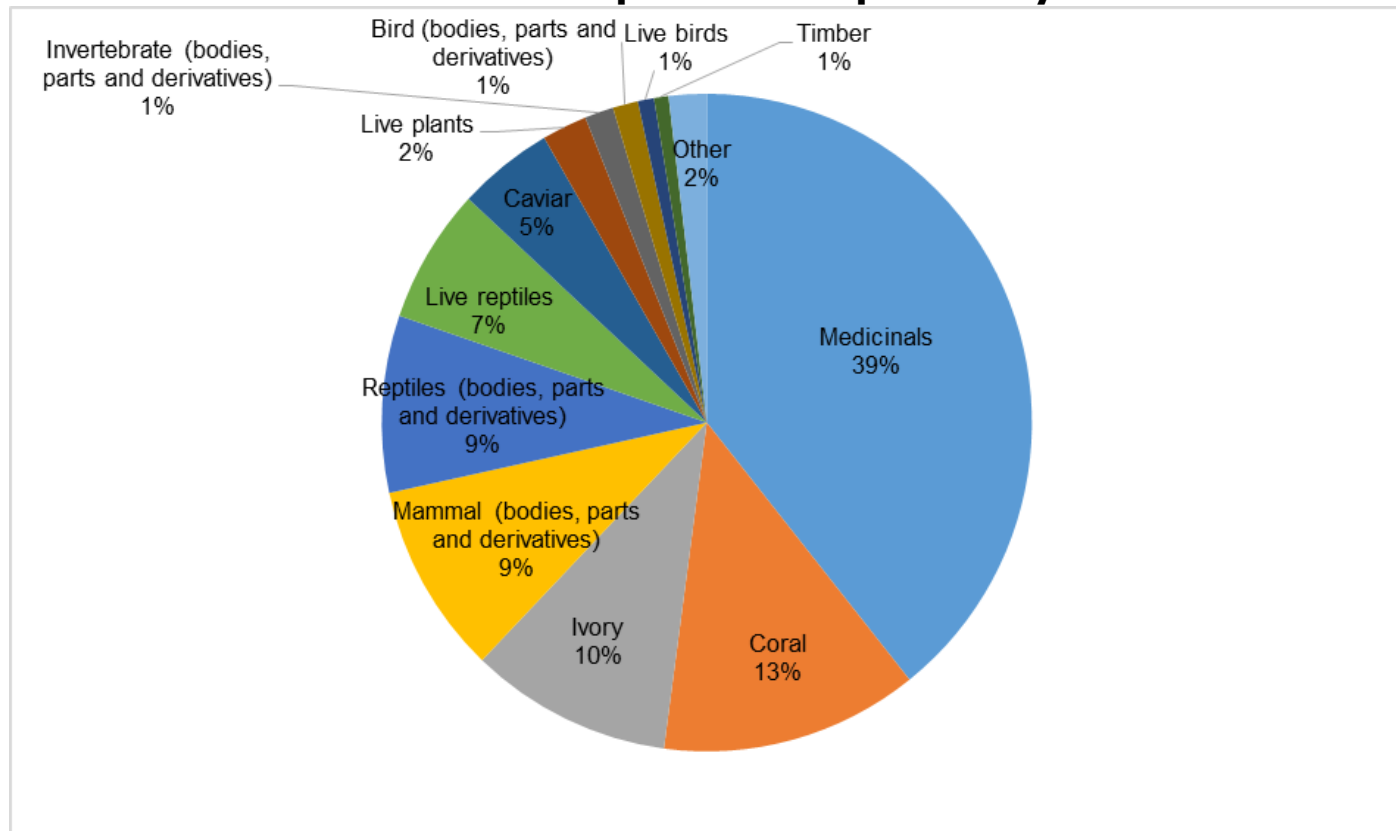
Wildlife trafficking is a serious criminal activity, and it's on the rise

Wildlife trafficking is globally **third only behind narcotics and illegal arms trade**



# The EU as market, transit and source region for illegal wildlife products

## Overview of seizures of wildlife products reported by EU MS in 2014



## **Example: Belgian ruling on organised large-scale smuggling of birds across the EU**

- illegal taking of Annex A to Council Regulation (EC) No 338/97 listed species of bird eggs/infant birds (mainly birds of prey) from the wild in France and Spain
- through falsifying of rings and breeders' declarations, the defendants obtained CITES certificates for 'captive born and bred' specimens, allowing them to offer the birds for sale in spite of the general ban on trade in Annex A species
- e.g. *Aquila fasciata*, *Haliaetus leucocephalus*, *H. vocifer*, *Hieraetus pennatus*
- During the criminal proceedings, the court explicitly compared the case with international drugs trafficking and highlighted that the defendants had taken advantage of the low political priority assigned to wildlife trafficking



# Objectives of the WAP

- Put wildlife trafficking higher on the political agenda of the EU and its MS, also beyond environmental experts
- Turn high-level commitments against wildlife trafficking (UN General Assembly, G7 leaders, UN Crime Commission) into concrete deliverables with timeline and monitoring mechanisms
- Reinforce EU action against wildlife trafficking in the EU and globally

## Three pillars

Prevention	Enforcement	Global Partnership
Reduce demand	Implementation of legislation	Use diplomatic tools
Reduce supply	Training of the enforcement chain	Strengthen development support
Engage with business sectors	Focus organised crime	Use trade policy leverage
Address corruption	Stronger role for Europol/Eurojust	Address links with security
Engage local communities better	Use of EU cooperation instruments	International law enforcement cooperation

## **Priority 2 – Making implementation and enforcement of existing rules and the fight against organised wildlife crime more effective**

*Objective 2.1: Ensure more even implementation of EU rules on the wildlife trade and develop a more strategic approach to checks and the enforcement of rules against wildlife trafficking at EU level*

***Action 11: Step up efforts to ensure implementation of the EU roadmap towards eliminating the illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds (also relevant under Priority 1)***

- **Expected results:**
  - Funding provided for MIKT and 1<sup>st</sup> meeting held
  - Action taken to improve national monitoring and enforcement of compliance

# **Council Conclusions adopted on 20 June 2016**

**> Welcoming the AP, endorsing its priorities, calling for timely implementation**

## **NEXT STEPS**

- Inter service group within the Commission
- Scoreboard
- Yearly expert meetings with MS planned (first in February 2017)
- In mid 2018, COM will report on progress
- In 2020 evaluation of the Action Plan



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**Thank you for your  
attention**