



**CONVENTION ON
MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.1

3 September 2025

Original: English

15th MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES
Campo Grande, Brazil, 23-29 March 2026
Agenda Item 26.1

**THE PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE
OF MIGRATORY BIRDS**

(Prepared by the Secretariat)

Summary:

This document reports on progress to implement Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14) The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB), Decisions 14.119–14.124 *Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT)*, Decision 14.125 *Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force* and Decisions 14.126–14.129 *South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force*.

The document proposes draft amendments to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14), the adoption of new Decisions and the deletion of Decisions 14.119– 14.129.

The draft Decisions, if adopted, would contribute to Targets 1.3, 3.1, 4.1–4.3, 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5 of the Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032.

THE PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

Background

1. The Conference of the Parties at its 14th meeting (COP14), reviewed and adopted [Resolution 11.16 \(Rev.COP14\) The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds \(IKB\)](#).
2. COP14 also adopted Decisions that focus on three different geographical areas, along with distinct Task Forces: Decisions 14.119–14.124 [Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean \(MIKT\)](#); Decision 14.125 [Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force](#) and Decisions 14.126–14.129 [South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force](#).

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

3. COP14 adopted Decisions 14.119–14.124, which read as follows:

14.119 Decision directed to: Parties

Parties that are members of the MIKT are invited to:

- a) *periodically use the Scoreboard as a national tool to self-assess progress in addressing the illegal killing of wild birds; and*
- b) *provide to the Secretariat, voluntarily and to the extent of availability and relevance of information for the indicators, the information requested in the Scoreboard, for the purposes of discussion within the MIKT and to facilitate the sharing of information and best practice among Parties.*

14.120 Decision directed to: Parties and Range States

Parties and Range States are invited to undertake national reviews of the production, sale, use and regulation of use of mist nets and other nets that are used for illegally trapping wild birds, as an input for the task directed to the Scientific Council on this matter.

14.121 Decision directed to: Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and others

Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and others are encouraged to implement the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region and the MIKT Workplan 2021-2025

14.122 Decision directed to: the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council, subject to the availability of external resources, in liaison with the CMS Secretariat, and in conjunction with Decision 14.182 (a) Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Wildlife, is requested to undertake a scientific review on the scope and scale of illegal killing and taking of birds, as well as illegal trade of birds across sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia to enable Parties, policy instruments and NGOs to set appropriate priorities to address the issue.

14.123 Decision directed to: the Scientific Council

The Scientific Council, as far as possible in cooperation with the relevant bodies of other appropriate multilateral environmental agreements, and subject to the availability of resources, is requested to contribute as appropriate to a global situation analysis on production, sale, use and regulation of the use of mist nets and other sorts of nets used for bird trapping, which may include:

- a) *compiling data on the global scale of the use of nets for killing, taking and trade of birds to support an assessment of the illegal component and impact on CMS-listed species;*
- b) *identifying where mist nets are produced and sold, including by building on information from existing ringing schemes such as EURING and similar schemes available in other regions;*
- c) *producing an overview of national legislation regulating production, sale, possession and use of mist nets and other sorts of nets used for bird trapping;*
- d) *produce guidance on undertaking national assessments of production, sale, use and regulation of mist nets and other nets used for trapping birds;*
- e) *produce guidance for governments and enforcement authorities on regulation of production and sale of mist nets and other nets used for bird trapping; and*
- f) *produce guidance on the legal aspects of trade of mist nets and other nets that can be used for illegal killing, taking and trade of birds for online retailers and other retailers*

14.124 Decision directed to: the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall:

- a) *compile, in the intersessional period between the 14th and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the information provided by the Parties under Decision 14.119; and*
- b) *share that information with MIKT members for the purposes outlined in Decision 14.119 in the intersessional period between the 14th and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Activities to implement Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14) and Decisions 14.119–14.124**Operationalization of the MIKT**

4. As of July 2025, 21 CMS Parties and the European Union are members of the MIKT. Three interested Parties and one non-Party have been participating as observers. Eleven multilateral environmental agreements and networks, and nine international non-governmental organizations, are also observers.
5. The MIKT relies on the regular advice of the [Consultative Group](#) (see [MIKT Modus Operandi](#)), which met online twice in 2024 to prepare for the 6th meeting of the MIKT.
6. Coordination of the MIKT and implementation of its workplan is supported by a Coordinator, contracted by the Secretariat. The Coordinator also supports efforts to establish dedicated task forces in other regions of the world, such as South-West Asia.

Activities of the MIKT

Meetings of the MIKT

7. The 6th meeting of the MIKT ([MIKT6](#)) was held from 13 to 15 May 2025 in Bonn, Germany. It was a Joint Meeting of the Task Force on illegal killing, taking and trade (IKB) of migratory wild birds and the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points (SFPs) on IKB. It was attended by 110 people, 60 in person and 50 online.

Workplan and Strategic Framework 2020-2030

8. MIKT members have adopted the [Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region](#) (RSP) as the strategic framework of action until 2030. The overarching long-term goal of the RSP is the eradication of IKB within the geographic scope of the Bern Convention and MIKT, with the goal of a 50 per cent reduction in the scale and scope of IKB by 2030, compared to a 2020 baseline. The Plan is structured around one process-oriented objective (National IKB Action Plans) and [five result-oriented objectives](#).
9. At MIKT6, a process was agreed for the mid-term evaluation of the implementation of the RSP, to be completed by mid-2026.

Deliverables and training materials

10. Since COP14, MIKT members have endorsed the [Suggested Methodology and Guidance for Conducting Socio-Economic Research into the Motivations behind IKB](#) (June 2023). Furthermore, the CMS Secretariat has contracted BirdLife International through a small-scale funding agreement to conduct a survey on IKB motivations in MIKT countries, to run from May 2025 to April 2026. The aim is to present the results of the survey at COP15.

Scoreboard

11. The [Scoreboard to assess the progress in combating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds \(IKB\)](#) was adopted in 2017. It is a self-assessment tool used by countries to assess progress towards eradicating IKB. The Scoreboard is used by both MIKT members and Bern Convention SFPs.
12. After two rounds of Scoreboard questionnaires in 2018 and 2020, responses to the 2023 Scoreboard exercise were submitted by 25 countries (including 13 of the 21 MIKT members; the EU does not complete the Scoreboard as it is a national-level exercise).
13. The analysis of the 2023 Scoreboard responses was presented at MIKT6 (available as [UNEP/CMS/COP15/Inf.26.1a](#)). The main conclusions from the analysis are as follows:
 - i) All countries show gradual improvement between Scoreboard exercises, suggesting that the Scoreboard is a helpful tool for organizing action, prioritizing work and building ownership;
 - ii) Most improvement is noted in the areas of prevention, with national legislation as the best scoring area;
 - iii) Challenges remain in monitoring IKB, enforcement, prosecution and sanctions;
 - iv) National Action Plans for combating IKB are prepared in about a third of the countries, indicating the need for regional workshops to promote such plans;

- v) Awareness raising and training is very much linked to available funding. Countries in North Africa and the Middle East report lack of funding, and experience difficulties in implementation.
14. Since 2022, the Bern Convention Secretariat has supported a [website](#) where the raw country responses are uploaded. Of the 39 countries that have completed the Scoreboard at least once, 26 have given permission to have their answers uploaded. The 2023 answers were added during 2024 for those countries that gave permission.

Workshops and training

15. The [Guidance for the Development and Implementation of National Action Plans against the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Birds](#) was endorsed by the MIKT in late 2022. In 2024, the Secretariat contracted Stichting BirdLife Europe, to support the organization of a regional [workshop on National Action Plans on the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds](#), in Podgorica between 2 and 4 September 2024, co-organized by the Government of Montenegro. The workshop was addressed to Balkan countries and attended by 38 experts from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. More details can be found in the [Meeting Report](#).

MIKT website

16. The Secretariat maintains the MIKT website. In late 2023, a new section [dedicated to the RSP](#) was launched on the MIKT website, providing an easy-to-access location to key documents and guidance endorsed by MIKT members, as well as other documents of interest.

Funding

17. An additional phase of funding from March 2024 to June 2028 was agreed by the European Union, through the NDICI¹ Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) III. Funding is provided for the coordination of the MIKT, as well as meetings and implementation of key activities of the RSP. COP14 extended the recognition of the European Union as *Champion Plus* for their generous support and commitment towards addressing IKB in the Mediterranean for the period 2015 to 2028.

Other meetings

18. Contributing to the RSP's Prevention Objective, the MIKT Coordinator participated in a number of meetings and conferences, showcasing the work of the MIKT:
- I. the 3rd Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MOU, 3-6 July 2023, Dubai, UAE;
 - II. a side event on '*Global Illegal Taking of Birds*', co-organized by the CMS Secretariat on 14 February 2024, at CMS COP14;
 - III. a [working group meeting on Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds in South-West Asia](#), in Riyadh, 15-16 January 2024;
 - IV. a meeting on Illegal Trade of Migratory Birds especially in the Middle East, held in Amman, 23-26 April 2024;
 - V. a hybrid workshop organized by UNEP together with the Government of Lebanon, regarding the illegal killing of migratory birds in Lebanon, in Beirut and online on 15 May 2024, and a follow-up online meeting on 21 May 2024.

¹ Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Initiative

- VI. a Wildlife Crime Conference organized by the NGO BirdLife Cyprus and the Vulture Conservation Foundation in Limassol, Cyprus, on 22-24 May 2024. The MIKT Coordinator delivered a speech in the 'Setting the scene' part of the programme.

Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA)

19. COP14 adopted Decision 14.125 *Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force*, which reads as follows:

14.125 Decision directed to: Parties, non-Parties, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, and others

Parties, non-Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others are encouraged to:

- a) *support the operations and the coordination of the Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA); and*
- b) *contribute with relevant data and expertise on the Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds in their territories and cooperate in the implementation of the Programme of Work of the Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA).*

Operationalization of the Task Force

20. The ITTEA² works in close cooperation with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Waterbirds.³ As of July 2025, of the 22 countries in the region, nine (Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Thailand, and Viet Nam) have nominated representatives to the ITTEA, and Malaysia is currently determining their nominated representative. Eleven observer organizations and expert advisory groups have also joined the Task Force (BirdLife International, Burung Laut Indonesia, Education for Nature Vietnam, Haribon Foundation, Malaysian Nature Society, Monitor Conservation Research Society, Philippines Biodiversity Conservation Foundation Inc., Spoon-billed Sandpiper in China, TRAFFIC, Wild Heritage of Sumatra Foundation, WWF Hong Kong), along with representatives of other organizations who participate in activities through the EAAFP's Task Force. Four other independent experts also joined the Task Force to contribute their ongoing research findings.
21. The hiring of a consultant as ITTEA Coordinator for the period October 2022–May 2026 was funded by the Government of Australia under the Migratory Species Champion Programme.

Activities of the Task Force

22. To address Objectives 1 and 3 of the ITTEA [Programme of Work \(POW\)](#), the Secretariat contracted Malaysian Nature Society–Kuching Branch in December with funds from the Australian Government, to support additional surveys and public awareness-raising activities in Sarawak, Malaysia for CMS-priority species, particularly the Far Eastern Curlew. The additional surveys provide necessary data for establishing baseline estimates in Malaysian Borneo and support capacity-building for long-term monitoring programmes for migratory birds. Activities were conducted in February to

² <https://www.cms.int/en/taskforce/ittea>

³ <https://www.eaaflyway.net/task-force-on-illegal-hunting-taking-and-trade-of-migratory-waterbirds/>

April 2025, with additional re-surveys planned for July and August 2025 to clarify population status.

23. To address Objective 2 of the ITTEA POW, the Secretariat contracted BirdLife International (Asia) Limited in June 2025, with funds from the Australian Government, to develop a self-assessment national scoreboard tool for Parties and other observers to use in order to monitor progress in tackling illegal taking of birds. The scoreboard tool aims to improve and standardize monitoring practices and will be reflective of the priorities of the East Asian Australasian Flyway.
24. In response to Decision 14.125, the Secretariat contracted BirdLife International in November 2024 to conduct a literature review and situation analysis of the use, production and sale of mist nets and mist net-like traps for killing, taking and trade of birds. The research also included a questionnaire for government focal points and regional technical experts, and data collected from videos uploaded to social media and through records on iNaturalist through the '[Tangled and Trapped](#)' online project. The report titled *Assessing the use and impact of nets on wild bird populations in Asia and the Mediterranean* is available as an Information Document ([UNEP/CMS/COP15/Inf.26.1b](#)). The results of this study will be used to: a) provide guidance on standardized assessments for monitoring the use and sale of mist nets and mist net-like traps, and b) provide guidance and recommendations for improved legislation and regulation of mist nets and mist net-like traps. BirdLife also conducted an analysis of use, supply and legislation for the use and possession of mist nets in the Mediterranean focusing on eight countries from the EU, Middle East and North Africa. The summary of the report is presented in Annex 3.

Workshops and training

25. Following requests for increased capacity to conduct market surveillance, a [virtual workshop](#) on the methodology for and utility of market surveys, net surveys and hunter surveys was conducted on 2 and 7 August 2023. A total of 50 participants attended from ITTEA Range States and observer organizations. At the workshop, BirdLife and their local partners also shared summary findings from the [situation analysis report on bird hunting in mainland Southeast Asia](#), which relied on surveys like those discussed at the workshop.
26. A webinar on Viet Nam's legislative reforms and how those efforts allowed for improved capacity to address illegal wildlife trafficking was held on 26 September 2023. The presentation was delivered by the Vice Director and Head of Policy and Legislation for Education for Nature, Viet Nam. The workshop demonstrated how legislative enhancements could improve enforcement capabilities as applied to the issue of illegal taking of migratory birds.

Other meetings

27. The ITTEA and EAAFP held a [joint online meeting](#), on 8 October 2024, to share news of recent activities, progress and upcoming actions for work on illegal take in the flyway. The meeting featured a webinar from Dr. Eduardo Gallo-Cajiao (Assistant Professor, Colorado State University) on his assessment of governance structures and their impacts on addressing threats to migratory shorebirds. The meeting also provided an opportunity to share information on Decisions from CMS COP14.
28. The ITTEA Coordinator attended a special webinar hosted by BirdLife International and the Oriental Bird Club (OBC) on 18 January 2025 on tackling the threat of illegal mist net use in the EAAF. Case studies were shared from north Viet Nam, Thailand and

China, and representatives from the Supreme People's Procuratorate of China were able to present on actions China was taking to address this issue. More details are available in the [OBC's meeting report](#).

South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force

29. COP14 adopted Decisions 14.127–14.129 *South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force*, which read as follows:

14.126 Decision directed to: Parties and non-Parties

Parties are encouraged, and non-Parties are invited to:

- a) *investigate current levels of illegal taking of migratory birds in this region and to actively contribute to the establishment and operation of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force;*
- b) *set up the structures required, for example through the elaboration of national action plans against the illegal taking of migratory birds, to ensure active collaboration between stakeholders to address this threat; and*
- c) *support the establishment, operations and coordination of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force.*

14.127 Decision directed to: Intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, and others

Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others are invited to engage, as members or observers, in the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force and to contribute with relevant data and tools on the illegal taking of migratory birds in the South-West Asia region.

14.128 Decision directed to: the Standing Committee

The Standing Committee is requested to approve Terms of Reference for the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force.

14.129 Decision directed to: the Secretariat

The Secretariat shall, subject to the availability of external resources, convene the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force, in line with the Terms of Reference drafted by the Secretariat and approved by the Standing Committee.

Operationalization of the [South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Task Force](#)

30. The [first meeting of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force](#) (SWAITB TF) took place on 20 and 21 May in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, hosted by the National Center for Wildlife (NCW). The meeting agreed on the Terms of Reference for the Task Force and forwarded those to the CMS Standing Committee for approval, in line with Decision 14.129.
31. The meeting participants also discussed the draft Action Plan for the region, and started a consultation with members for its final adoption before the end of 2025.
32. In August 2025, a CMS notification was sent to all SWAITB Range States to nominate their focal points for this Task Force as well as for observers who may have an interest in attending and supporting the work of the Task Force Action Plan.

Funding

33. The Task Force has been launched with financial support from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia under the Migratory Species Champion Programme. In August 2025, in close correspondence with the Secretariat, the NCW of Saudi Arabia hired a consultant to work as Coordinator of the SWAITB TF. A future partnership arrangement for continuing the coordination under the CMS Secretariat based on funding from Saudi Arabia was under way at the time of writing.

Discussion and analysis

34. The main proposed amendments to [Resolution 11.16 \(Rev. COP14\)](#) are the inclusion of a reference to the development and implementation of national action plans, or relevant policy documents, as an appropriate tool for organizing and prioritizing action to combat illegal taking of birds (ITB) at national level. The MIKT discussed and requested including a reference to action plans in the Resolution during its last meeting in May 2025, as well as in earlier relevant workshops, to facilitate the legislative aspect of adoption of action plans at national level. The proposed amendment provides a generic reference to action plans or relevant policy documents, as these are promoted by all ITB TFs as an appropriate tool for implementing their strategy or work programme.
35. Additionally, the COP is asked to adopt the updated Terms of Reference (ToR) for the ITTEA, to include waterbirds which, until now, were excluded from its remit. The expansion of the taxonomic scope to include waterbirds reflects the evolution of the task force process and the implementation of its POW in practice on the ground. Government agencies and NGOs whose purviews cover migratory bird species often also include waterbirds. Market surveys aimed at understanding the scope and scale of trade of migratory birds have also found waterbirds to be similarly threatened. The ITTEA and the EAAFP Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Waterbirds will act jointly on waterbirds, and the ITTEA will take the lead for all migratory birds as identified by CMS, thus streamlining cooperation between members of each group, with distinct specializations to more effectively address knowledge gaps and threats.
36. Finally, the proposed amendments include updates of references to recent documents as well as deletion of obsolete documents, and an update regarding the launch in the intersessional period of the new task force in South-West Asia (SWAITB TF).
37. The following amendments to [Resolution 11.16 \(Rev. COP14\)](#) are proposed:
- a) amend and ensure uniform use of the names of task forces for the illegal taking of migratory birds;
 - b) update references to international and global initiatives, and include reference to the Samarkand Strategic Plan 2024–2032;
 - c) update the Resolution regarding the launch of the SWAITB TF;
 - d) promote the inclusion of a direct reference to the need to develop and implement national action plans on illegal taking of migratory birds or relevant policy documents; and
 - e) update the ToR for the ITTEA to include waterbirds.

Recommended actions

38. The Conference of the Parties is recommended to:

- a) adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14) contained in Annex 1 of this document, including the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA) contained in the Annex of the Resolution;
- b) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document.
- c) delete Decisions 14.119–14.129.
- d) take note of the updated *Scoreboard analysis* contained in UNEP/CMS/COP15/Inf.26.1a.
- e) take note of the report on *Assessing the use and impact of nets on wild bird populations in Asia and the Mediterranean* (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Inf.26.1b; summary in Annex 3).

ANNEX 1

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION 11.16 (Rev.COP14)

THE PREVENTION OF ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS

NB: Proposed new text to the Resolution is underlined. Text to be deleted is ~~crossed-out~~.

Recalling Article III (5) of the Convention, which provides for Parties that are Range States to prohibit the taking of species included in Appendix I, and Article V (5) (k) on Guidelines for AGREEMENTS, which suggests, where appropriate and feasible, each Agreement should prepare for procedures for coordinating action to suppress illegal taking,

Further recalling that the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA), the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU), the Action Plan for the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds (AEMLAP) as adopted through Resolution 11.17 (Rev.COP14), and most other bird-related MOUs and action plans under CMS include measures related to the protection of birds,

Acknowledging the collaborative effort of the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime working to bring coordinated support to national wildlife law enforcement agencies and regional networks, and the need to establish a coordination mechanism between the Consortium and CMS in relation to the mandates laid out in this Resolution on illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds,

Noting the *Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds* as adopted through Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP14) *Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds* and the AEMLAP,

Noting the definition of the illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds as agreed in the European Conference on Illegal Killing of Birds, Larnaca, Cyprus, in 2011: "Activities which are illegal under national or regional law/regulations and involve the deliberate pursuit, killing, injuring or catching alive of wild birds or are aimed at illegal marketing live or dead specimens of wild birds, including their parts and derivatives. Such activities include but are not limited to: killing/trapping in closed periods, in areas with prohibitions in force, by unauthorised persons and/or protected species; use of prohibited means and substances; breach of bag limits; possession, donation, use, movement, transfer, offer for sale, advertisement, consumption, import, introduction from the sea, transit or export, of specimens.",

Regretting that illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds still represent important factors against the achievement and maintenance of the favourable conservation status of bird populations in all major flyways, negatively affecting conservation actions undertaken by States and resulting in adverse impacts on the conservation, legal hunting, agriculture and tourism sectors,

Concerned that there are continued and intensified illegal killing, including poisoning via usage of poisoned carcasses and poisoning baits against carnivores, taking and trade of migratory birds in some areas, although also with significant reductions in others, and that the risk remains high that this is contributing to population declines of a number of species including some that are listed on CMS Appendix I and globally threatened with extinction (e.g., Spoon-billed Sandpiper (*Eurynorhynchus pygmeus*), Yellow-breasted Bunting (*Emberiza aureola*) and Marsh Seedeater (*Sporophila palustris*)),

Aware that the use of mist nets and other nets is a major cause of illegal, killing, taking and trade of birds, including of CMS Appendix I species and that control of the production and sale of such nets can be the most effective way of reducing such illegal activity,

Aware that subsistence uses, recreational activities and organized crime are key drivers of such illegal killing, taking and trade for, *inter alia*, supply of food, trophies, cage birds, and support of traditional practices,

Aware that there is need for full analysis of motivation and drivers of deliberate illegal killing of birds, which could be country or region specific,

Aware that actions are necessary to decrease the demand and/or to change consumer behaviour with regards to products, such as food, taxidermies, decorative and songbirds, live birds of prey, bird parts used for belief-based use, etc.,

Aware that such illegal killing, taking and trade are a cause of great national and international public concern along each flyway,

Welcoming the practical responses by several Parties and Signatories to CMS instruments to international concern about illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds,

Noting the Directive 2008/99/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 November 2008 on the protection of the environment through criminal law,

Noting the adoption of the Convention on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law, by the Council of Europe;

Welcoming the recent enhanced focus on tackling the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean region including through:

- Recommendation No 164 (2013) of the Bern Convention Standing Committee on the implementation of the Tunis Action Plan 2013-2020 for the eradication of illegal killing, trapping and trade of wild birds;
- ~~The Roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds (12/2012) developed in relation to Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and Council on the Conservation of Wild Birds;~~
- The formerly AEWA-led, multi-stakeholder *Plan of Action to address bird trapping along the Mediterranean coasts of Egypt and Libya* (UNEP/CMS/ScC18/Inf.10.12) the development of which was funded by the Government of Germany and which was integrated into the Intergovernmental Task Force to Address Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT); and
- The BirdLife International-led reviews of the scale and extent of illegal killing and taking in the Mediterranean, Northern and Central Europe and the Caucasus, and its development of guidance for monitoring the extent of such illegal activities, updated in 2019/2022.

Also welcoming the review of the scale and scope of illegal killing and taking in the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq led by BirdLife International and the Ornithological Society of the Middle East with cooperation with several governmental and non-governmental organizations in the region to assess the scale and scope of illegal killing of migratory birds and further welcoming the collaboration in place to develop a roadmap to address the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds (IKB) in this region,

Recognizing the role of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) as the principal international instrument for ensuring that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the species' survival,

Welcoming the Declaration of the London Conference on the Illegal Wildlife Trade which states that “*Action to tackle the illegal trade in elephants and rhinoceroses will strengthen our effectiveness in tackling the illegal trade in other endangered species*”,

Acknowledging the role of legal and sustainable hunting of birds in sustainable livelihoods and conservation of habitats and the role of the hunting community in promoting and encouraging compliance with the law and sustainable hunting practices,

Welcoming the recent synergies on actions to prevent illegal killing created between the Bern Convention, the European Union, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), AEWA and the Raptors MOU and encouraging the continuation of their cooperation on the conservation of migratory birds,

Noting the Cairo Declaration supporting a zero-tolerance approach on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean Region ~~as well as the Programme of Work (POW) of MIKT for the period 2016-2020 developed~~ adopted at its first meeting,

Welcoming the support from the Bern Convention Standing Committee to the organization of ~~back-to-back~~ and joint meetings of the Bern Convention Special Focal Points (SFPs) Network and MIKT, and acknowledging the productive cooperation established between both networks in the fight against illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds,

Welcoming the work on the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region, as a coordinated effort by the MIKT and the Bern Convention,

Acknowledging the efforts of the CMS Secretariat to build a sustainable line of cooperation with INTERPOL and EUROPOL within the framework of MIKT, towards effective law enforcement responses in the Mediterranean and serving as a basis to support other task forces established to address the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in other regions, when appropriate,

Welcoming the cooperation between the CMS Secretariat and the European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE) to train prosecutors and investigators from countries in the Mediterranean that have responsibility for law enforcement to protect migratory birds,

Acknowledging the need to establish lines of action and co-operation on criminal matters affecting the environment in order to harmonize the national legislations,

Welcoming the support of the Criminal Justice Programme of the European Union and the efforts of European BirdLife partners to assess levels of implementation and enforcement of Directive 2008/99/EC on the Protection of the Environment through Criminal Law by EU Member States, and welcoming also the creation of a European Network of Environmental Crime as a coordination mechanism between legal and other practitioners which works to prevent and prosecute illegal bird killing and capture, facilitate information exchange, as well as builds communication channels with other networks and MEA Secretariats,

Recognizing the work of the East Asian-Australasian Flyways Partnership (EAAFP) to prevent illegal hunting⁴ and unsustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds, and welcoming the establishment of the task force on illegal hunting, taking and trade of migratory waterbirds along the flyway, modelled on MIKT,

Acknowledging the interest of the Range States in developing an initiative against illegal taking of birds in South-West Asia expressed at *the BirdLife International Workshop toward a Roadmap to tackle illegal killing of birds in the Middle East* held in Jordan in October 2021,

Welcoming the kind support of the government of Saudi Arabia to host the working group meeting in January 2024, ~~and to agree on the terms of references of the establishment of the South-West Asia Task Force on Illegal hunting, Taking and trade of Migratory Birds on South-West Asia~~ Intergovernmental Task Force, launched in May 2025 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,

Noting the European Commission Communication COM (2016), 710 final, Commission Work Programme 2017 “Delivering a Europe that protects, empowers and defends”, and welcoming the initiative under Priority 10 envisaging an Action Plan on Environmental Compliance Assurance to support Member States on the promotion, monitoring and compliance enforcement by duty-holders with EU environmental law,

Noting the European Commission Communication COM (2017) 198 final, “An Action Plan for nature, people the economy” and the associated Commission Staff Working Document (2017) 139 final, “Factsheet providing details of actions in the Action Plan for Nature, people and the economy and the Council Conclusions of 19 June 2017,

Noting the European Commission Communication (COM (2020) 380 final) *EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030: Bringing nature back into our lives*, and, in particular, actions 3.2. on Stepping up implementation and enforcement of EU environmental legislation and 4.2.2. on Trade policy.

Noting the EU Commission ~~C~~ommunication COM (2018) 10 final “EU actions to improve environmental compliance and governance” and the associated Commission Staff WD (2018) 10 final “Environmental Compliance Assurance — scope, concept and need for EU actions”,

Welcoming the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, approved by the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2022, and its Target 5, to ensure that the use, harvesting and trade of wild species is sustainable, safe and legal.

Referring to the ~~Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023 (UNEP/CMS/COP11/Doc.15.2)~~ *Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032* and in particular Target ~~6~~ 3.1 ~~that~~ which states “By 2032, any take, use and trade of migratory species listed in CMS Appendices is sustainable, safe and legal, overexploitation is prevented, risk of pathogen spillover is reduced and negative impacts on non-target species and their ecosystems are minimized” (CMS Resolution 14.1),

~~“fisheries and hunting have no significant direct or indirect adverse impacts on migratory species, their habitats or their migration routes, and impacts of fisheries and hunting be within safe ecological limits”,~~

Having regard to the Strategic Plan of AEWA 2019-2027, especially Objective 2.1.b: “By MOP8, Parties establish and/or maintain adequate systems for making realistic estimates of all forms of waterbird harvesting, including illegal taking, at national level” and 2.2.e. “By

⁴ There are regional differences in the agreed terminology, in English, for the problem of the illegal removal of birds from the wild; in Europe and the Mediterranean, the agreed term is “illegal killing and taking” to avoid confusion with legitimate hunting practices, whereas in Asia-Australasia and South-West Asia regions, the agreed term is “illegal hunting and taking” due to cultural sensitivities.

MOP9, Parties that have not already done so implement measures to reduce, and as far as possible eliminate, illegal taking (in accordance with paragraph 4.1.6 of the AEWA Action Plan)” and the Action Plan of the Raptors MOU, especially Priority Action 4a “Protecting all species from unlawful killing, including poisoning, shooting, persecution, and exploitation”,

Acknowledging the widespread adoption of the zero-tolerance approach, as well as progress at the Party level towards the monitoring of illegal activities and the adoption of a coordinated approach covering each stage of the chain of activities related to illegal killing, taking or trade,

Taking note of the declaration and outcomes of the Global Flyways Summit in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, April 2018, related to Illegal Killing of Birds, and

Noting the report ‘*Bird hunting in mainland Southeast Asia: Situation analysis and recommendations for conservation action*’, produced in contribution to Objective 1 of the ITTEA workplan 2023-2027 and coordinated by BirdLife International, in cooperation with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership, Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative and several non-governmental organizations and government agencies in the region and further noting the collaboration in place to develop national action plans to address the illegal hunting, taking and trade of migratory birds in this region,

*The Conference of the Parties to the
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals*

1. *Urges* Parties and invites non-Parties to commit to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any deliberate illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds and to adopting a full and proactive role in fighting against these illegal activities, thereby notably contributing to the achievement of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and its target 5 on illegal use, harvest and trade of wild species;
2. *Calls* on Parties and invites non-Parties and stakeholders to prioritize cases of illegal killing, taking and trade of birds, with special attention to profit-motivated crime and organized crime, taking into account the different levels of persons involved, from individuals to organized crime groups;
3. *Calls on* Parties, non-Parties and other stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations, to engage in immediate cooperation to address the illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds through support of, and collaboration with, existing international initiatives and mechanisms to address these issues, as well as establishing (as appropriate and where added value can be assured) Task Forces targeted at facilitating concerted action to eliminate illegal killing, taking and trade of shared populations of migratory birds in those areas where such problems are prevalent;
4. *Encourages* Parties and non-Parties, in collaboration with relevant frameworks and stakeholders, where concerns regarding cross-border illegal killing exist, to collaborate under the framework of CMS regarding information-sharing on reported incidents, collating data and piloting solutions, such as best practice guidance for hunting tourism companies;
5. *Calls on* the Secretariat to convene an Intergovernmental Task Force to Address Illegal Killing, Taking, and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean⁵ in conjunction with the Secretariats of AEWA, the Raptors MOU, the AEMLAP and the Bern Convention, involving the Mediterranean Parties, including the European Union, other interested Parties, including from outside the region, and other stakeholders such as BirdLife

⁵ The Task Force was established after COP11.

International and the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU (FACE), and to facilitate the implementation of existing guidelines and action plans, ~~any necessary new guidelines and action plans relating to the Mediterranean (and particularly the Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: *Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region*)~~ and to consider whether any new guidelines, action plans or other recommendations to respond to specific problems are necessary;

6. *Acknowledges* the work of MIKT in developing the Scoreboard to Assess the Progress in Combating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Wild Birds, ~~and implementing the first Scoreboard assessments and promotes~~ promoting its use as a voluntary tool for Parties to assess their own progress in combating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds;
7. *Requests* the Task Forces using the Scoreboard for self-assessment of their efforts in combating illegal taking of migratory birds to collect experiences from the practical use of the Scoreboard for its potential further development and submit their proposal to the relevant Secretariat(s) for evaluation, and requests the Secretariat(s), to submit if necessary, propositions of amendments to the relevant Standing Committee(s) for adoption;
8. *Decides* to establish⁶, subject to the availability of external resources, an Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA) and adopts the terms of reference included in the Annex 2 to this Resolution;
9. *Decides* to establish, subject to the availability of external resources, a South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force⁷ following a successful meeting of the Working Group in Riyadh in January 2024;
10. *Instructs* the Secretariat to actively work with Parties and non-Party Range States and others in South and Central America and the Caribbean to conduct an assessment of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in that region, building upon recent assessments of illegal take of shorebirds;
11. *Urges* Parties and encourages non-Parties, to ensure adequate national legislation to protect migratory species is in place and properly implemented and enforced, in line with CMS and its relevant associated instruments and other international instruments;
12. *Urges* Parties and invites non-Parties to promote and ensure synergies between work to implement the Guidelines to Prevent Poisoning of Migratory Birds as adopted through Resolution 11.15 (Rev.COP14), in particular in relation to poisoned baits, and to prevent illegal killing of birds;
13. *Requests* the Task Forces to encourage monitoring of the trends in illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds using comparable methodologies internationally and to facilitate the exchange of best practice experience in combating these activities, especially between particular trouble spots around the globe, building on the experience gained in the Mediterranean;
14. *Instructs* the Secretariat, in collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations, subject to the availability of external resources, and building on the

⁶ The Asia Pacific Illegal ~~Killing~~ Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force was established under the name *Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the East Asian Australasian Flyway (ITTEA)* and had its inaugural meeting on 12 March 2023 in Brisbane, Australia.

⁷ The South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force had its inaugural meeting on 20-21 May 2025, in Riyadh.

experience in the Mediterranean to support efforts to address illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds elsewhere in the world, including through the organization of workshops, as appropriate;

- 14bis *Calls on Parties and invites non-Parties and stakeholders, to develop and implement National Action Plans for Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds, or similar policy documents, outlining all the necessary actions, activities and processes necessary to combat illegal taking of birds at national level and promoting a zero-tolerance approach.*
15. *Calls on Parties and invites non-Parties and stakeholders, with the support of the Secretariat, to strengthen national and local capacity for addressing illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds, inter alia, by developing training courses, translating and disseminating relevant materials and examples of best practice, sharing protocols and regulations, transferring technology, and promoting the use of online tools, forensic techniques in wildlife investigations and other tools to address specific issues;*
16. *Urges Parties and invites the United Nations Environment Programme and relevant international organizations, bilateral and multilateral donors to support financially the operations of the Task Force to Address Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean, including through funding for its coordination, and subject to the results of monitoring mentioned in paragraph 5, the development of equivalent Task Forces at other trouble spots, including through the provision of financial assistance to developing countries for relevant capacity-building; and*
17. *Calls on the Secretariat to report progress, on behalf of the task forces ~~to~~on addressing illegal Killing, taking and Trade of migratory birds in the Mediterranean, Asia-Pacific, South-West Asia and other similar initiatives elsewhere in the world, on implementation and, as much as possible, on assessment of the efficacy of measures taken, at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.*

Annex to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP14)

TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE ASIA PACIFIC ILLEGAL TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE (ITTEA)

Background and purpose

This Task Force is established in line with the mandate provided by the Resolution adopted at COP11.16 *The prevention of illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds*, to assist the Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and its associated instruments, relevant MEAs and Conventions to fulfil their obligations to protect migratory birds from illegal hunting, taking and trade.

Goal

To ensure that no illegal hunting, taking and trade of migratory birds (HBITB) takes place in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway (EAAF).

Role

To facilitate concerted efforts and procedures to combat HBITB in the East Asian-Australasian Flyway in close cooperation with the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP).

Scope

The Task Force will be regional, covering all States of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway as follows: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Russian Federation, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste (East Timor), United States of America and Vietnam.

The Task Force will cover all migratory bird taxa as identified by CMS, ~~except waterbirds~~.

Remit

The Task Force will:

- Support and guide a review on the status of hunting regulations related to migratory birds in the EAAF;
- Support and guide a situation analysis on HBITB in the flyway, building on the existing work of CMS MIKT in the Mediterranean, Europe and Middle East;
- Promote and facilitate implementation of relevant Decisions and plans adopted in the framework of MEAs or other frameworks, especially the CMS, Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI) and bilateral migratory bird agreements;
- Stimulate internal and external communication and exchange of information, experience, best practice and knowledge-how;
- Assist in resource mobilization for priority actions, including cooperation with ASEAN;
- Monitor the implementation of the relevant Decisions and plans and their effectiveness, and regularly submit progress reports to the governing bodies of participating MEAs, including via an intergovernmental 'scoreboard' to indicate progress on eliminating

HBITB;

- Strengthen regional and international networks with experience on HBITB (e.g. ASEAN Wildlife Enforcement Network); and
- Liaise and share experience with both the CMS MIKT and the EAAFP Task Force.

Membership

The Task Force membership will be comprised of representatives of relevant government institutions ~~in the field of~~ related to the environment, game management, law enforcement and the judiciary in the countries that are Parties to the participating MEAs in the EAAF Region.

It will also ~~involve~~ comprise observers from the Secretariats of the participating MEAs and frameworks, as well as academic institutions, the hunting community, NGOs and other stakeholders, as appropriate.

In addition, the following representatives will be invited to contribute to the Task Force:

- Representatives of Parties elsewhere in the EAAF and beyond that wish to support the work of the Task Force;
- Representatives of the CMS Scientific Council, CMS MIKT, EAAFP Task Force, AEWA Technical Committee, ~~CMS Preventing Poisoning Working Group~~, the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbird Working Group, the Flyways Working Group, and other groups with relevant experience;
- Representatives from relevant Bilateral Migratory Bird Agreements and relevant IUCN specialist groups; and
- Relevant independent experts on HBITB and on migratory bird ecology and policy.

Governance

The Task Force will elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair from amongst its members.

~~Decision-making will be done by seeking consensus, as much as possible, among the group.~~

The Task Force will operate by seeking consensus, as much as possible, among the group, and in accordance with a *modus operandi* which shall be developed once the Task Force ~~is~~ is convened.

Operation

Funding permitting, a Coordinator will be appointed by the Task Force. ~~with the following functions~~ She/he will be responsible for:

- organizing the meetings of the Task Force and preparing the background documents;
- maintaining and moderating the Task Force's communication platform (website and intranet);
- facilitating implementation of decisions of the Task Force;
- facilitating fundraising and resource mobilization; and
- facilitating engagement with stakeholders within and beyond the Task Force.

Meetings of the Task Force will be convened at appropriate intervals, as considered necessary and funding permitting. Between meetings business will be conducted electronically through an online workspace (intranet) within the Task Force's website, which will provide the primary mode of communication.

In collaboration with Parties and relevant international organizations and subject to the availability of funds, the Task Force will organize regional workshops in trouble-spot areas to assist in the development of appropriate local or regional solutions.

ANNEX 2

DRAFT DECISIONS

TASK FORCE ON ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE OF MIGRATORY BIRDS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN (MIKT)

Directed to Parties

15.AA Parties that are members of the MIKT are invited to:

- a) periodically use the Scoreboard, as a national self-assessment tool, to evaluate progress in combating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds (IKB);
- b) provide to the Secretariat, the information requested in the Scoreboard, to inform discussions within the MIKT and to facilitate the sharing of information and best practice among Parties.

Directed to the Secretariat

15.BB The Secretariat shall:

- a) compile the information provided by the Parties under Decision 15.AA;
- b) share that information with MIKT members for the purposes outlined in Decision 15.AA
- c) ensure collaboration and coordination with the Global Initiative on Illegal and Unsustainable Take (Resolution 11.31 (Rev. COP14)).

ASIA PACIFIC ILLEGAL TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE

Directed to Parties and non-Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other relevant organizations

15.CC: Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are encouraged to actively participate in and engage with the Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA), including by contributing relevant data and expertise on the illegal taking of migratory birds in their territories;

SOUTH-WEST ASIA ILLEGAL TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS INTERGOVERNMENTAL TASK FORCE

Directed to Parties

15.DD Parties that are Range States of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (SWAITB) are invited to:

- a) actively participate, support and engage in the operations and coordination of the SWAITB;
- b) support the adoption and implementation of the Action Plan to Eradicate the Illegal Hunting, Taking and Trade of Birds in South-West Asia 2024-2032; and
- c) set up the necessary structures, for example through the elaboration of National Action Plans against the illegal taking of migratory birds, to ensure active collaboration between stakeholders to address this threat.

Directed to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and other relevant organizations

15.EE Intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and others are invited to engage, as observers, in the SWAITB, and to contribute with relevant data and tools on the illegal taking of migratory birds in the South-West Asia region.

Directed to the Secretariat

15.FF The Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, shall support the coordination and organization of SWAITB meetings, as appropriate, in line with the Task Force's Terms of Reference.

ILLEGAL TAKING OF MIGRATORY BIRDS AT GLOBAL LEVEL

Directed to Parties and other Range States

15.GG Parties and other Range States are invited to undertake national reviews of the production, sale, use and regulation of mist nets and other nets that are used for illegally trapping wild birds, as an input to the tasks directed to the Secretariat under Decision 15.II.

Directed to the Scientific Council

15.HH The Scientific Council is requested, subject to the availability of resources, to provide feedback and inputs to relevant draft outputs of the mist nets situation analysis produced under Decision 15.II.

Directed to the Secretariat

15.II The Secretariat shall:

- a) in conjunction with Resolution 11.31 (Rev.COP14) *Illegal and Unsustainable Taking of Wildlife*, and subject to the availability of resources, undertake a scientific review of the scope and scale of illegal taking and trading of birds across sub-Saharan Africa and Central Asia to enable Parties, policy instruments and NGOs to set appropriate priorities to address the issue.
- b) in cooperation with relevant bodies of other multilateral environmental agreements, and subject to available resources, build on the 2024–2025 BirdLife International analysis “*Assessing the use and impact of nets, including mist-nets, on wild bird populations in Asia*” and expand this work to a global level, which may include:
 - i. compiling global data on the use of nets for killing, capturing and trading birds, including the legality of such use, and its impact on CMS-listed species;
 - ii. identifying production and sale locations for mist nets, drawing on existing ringing schemes such as EURING and others worldwide;
 - iii. providing an overview of national legislation and developing guidance for governments and enforcement authorities on the regulation of production, sale, possession and use of mist nets and other nets used for bird trapping;
 - iv. developing guidance for national assessments on the production, sale, use and regulation of mist nets and other trapping nets;
 - v. offering guidance for online and other retailers on the legal aspects of trade in mist nets and other nets that could be used for illegal bird killing, capture and trade.

ASSESSING THE USE AND IMPACT OF NETS ON WILD BIRD POPULATIONS IN ASIA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN

Executive Summary

Nets, such as mist-nets and improvised fishing nets are known to be widely used in Asia to hunt and trap wild birds for, (1) human consumption (i.e. wild meat trade), (2) the caged bird trade, (3) management of species considered as pests in agriculture and aquaculture, (4) disturbance control, and (5) recreation. These practices have also led to the unintended capture of non-target species (or bycatch) and are likely to pose a significant threat to wild bird populations. Despite these conservation concerns, the impact of nets on wild birds remains inadequately assessed in the region and is likely severely underestimated. This lack of knowledge has also compromised efforts in many Asian countries to regulate and manage the sale, possession and use of nets, and carry out effective conservation interventions.

The study objective was to address key knowledge gaps on the extent to which nets (of all types) are used in Asia and how they may impact wild bird populations in this region. The study aimed to establish quantitative baseline data on the impact of mist-nets and other types of nets on wild bird populations in human-modified landscapes and wetlands across Asia, with a focus on three regions where nets are known to be prevalent, namely East Asia, South Asia and Southeast Asia. Finally, the study aimed to identify priorities and next steps to address the threats posed by the use of nets on wild bird populations in this region.

The study gathered information from four sources of data: (1) a structured questionnaire; (2) a systematic review using repositories of published research literature; (3) an analysis of the video evidence from social media platforms through targeted searches in 12 Asian languages; and (4) observations submitted to the 'Tangled & Trapped' project on the iNaturalist.org citizen science platform since 2020.

In total the researchers received 107 completed questionnaires from experts across the study region. Ninety-six (96) respondents indicated that nets were still being used in their respective countries (14 countries), with eight countries reporting that nets have been used 'frequently' to 'very frequently' in recent years. Nets were identified as being used for two main purposes: hunting (for consumption, trade, recreation, and/or merit release) and as a deterrent (to protect crops and/or aquaculture operations). They estimated that at least 375 bird species were impacted by nets in Asia (>15% of known bird species in Asia), including at least 211 migratory species associated with the East Asian–Australasian Flyway (EAAF). Notably, 45 species of global conservation concern (IUCN Red List status of CR, EN, VU, NT) were recorded.

From the systematic searches of the literature, the researchers highlighted the very low number of published papers on the use of nets and their impact, and suggested a significant gap in knowledge and focused research on the impact of nets on wild bird populations in Asia, with implications for bird conservation.

They also analysed the legislation governing the use and possession of nets in the different countries and included short summaries and highlights for each of the 21 countries studied.

The researchers make a number of recommendations regarding the use and possession of nets, emphasizing the urgent need for enhanced monitoring and surveillance, improved reporting, and stronger policy interventions to mitigate the risks posed by mist-netting and similar practices to both migratory and resident bird species in the region. They recommend restricting the sale and production of mist-nets, banning online sales, and limiting their use to licensed scientific research, as already implemented in some countries. Additionally, socioeconomic assessments, development and promotion of non-lethal crop protection methods, and targeted public awareness campaigns are essential to reduce bird mortality and promote sustainable coexistence.

The researchers conducted a similar analysis for the Mediterranean region, focusing on eight Mediterranean countries, three from the EU, two from the Middle East and three from North Africa. The research was conducted through questionnaire only, and focused on a). practical use of nets; b). sourcing and regulation; and c). legislation governing use and possession. Four kinds of nets were identified (mist nets, clap nets, nets over bushes and fishing nets). Most countries used mist nets, but some used all four types of nets. Users in most countries purchased the nets either from physical shops or from online platforms, where they are easily accessible. Finally, although the legislation in most countries prohibits the use of nets, enforcement was found to be lacking in most countries. Recommendations proposed for the reduction of the use of nets include firstly an improvement in enforcement efforts, and secondly raising awareness and an increase in penalties.