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PROPOSALS FOR A CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE MAGELLANIC PLOVER *(Pluvianellus socialis)* ALREADY INCLUDED IN APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION *

Summary:

The Proponents have submitted the attached proposal* for a Concerted Action for the Magellanic plover —in Spanish, chorlo de Magallanes (Chile), chorlito ceniciento (Argentina) (*Pluvianellus socialis*) —in accordance with the process set out in Resolution 12.28 (Rev.COP14).

*The geographical designations employed in this document do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the CMS Secretariat (or the United Nations Environment Programme) concerning the legal status of any country, territory, or area, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. The responsibility for the contents of the document rests exclusively with its author

PROPOSALS FOR A CONCERTED ACTION FOR THE MAGELLANIC PLOVER *(Pluvianellus socialis*) ALREADY INCLUDED IN APPENDICES I AND II OF THE CONVENTION

Proponent:

Republic of Chile and Republic of Argentina.

Target species, lower taxon or population, or group of taxa with common needs:

Kingdom: Animalia

Class: Aves

Order: Charadriiformes

Family: Pluvianellidae

Species: *Pluvianellus socialis*. In Chile: Chorlo de Magallanes, in Argentina: Chorlito ceniciento. In English: Magellanic plover, in French: Pluvier Magellan.

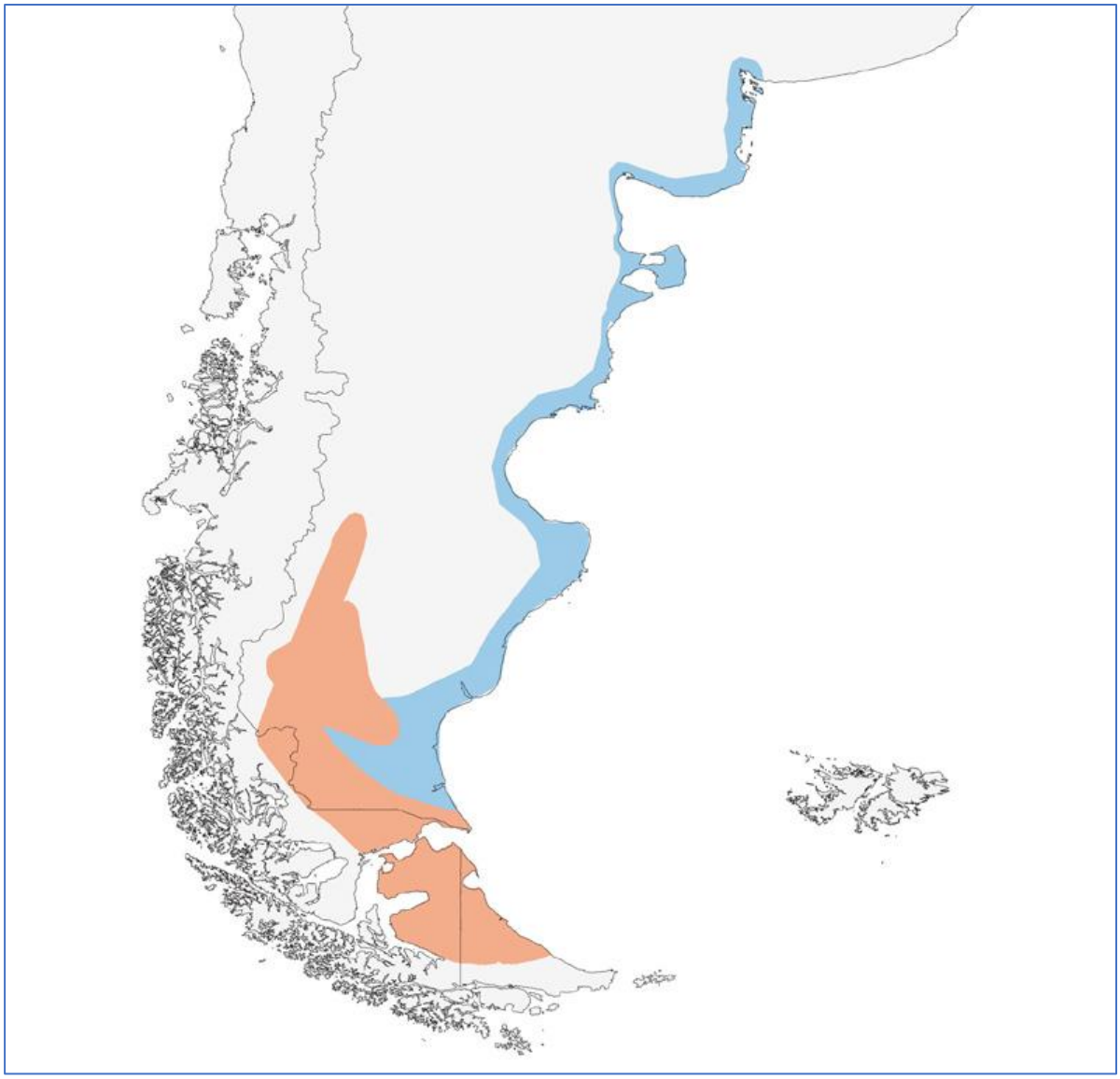
Known as “Toish-te” by the Selk’nam people, the zoologist Gray first described it as *Pluvianellus socialis* in 1846. It is a shorebird in the order Charadriiformes, and the sole representative of the family Pluvianellidae.

Geographic range:

The species is restricted to Patagonia, breeding in southern Chile and Argentina, and wintering along the Atlantic coast as far north as Península Valdés in Chubut Province, regularly reaching Buenos Aires Province (Fjeldså & Krabbe 1990; Ferrari et al. 2003; Matus 2018). The species occasionally reaches La Rioja Province (Sosa 2010) and has been recorded accidentally, for example in Uruguay (Castelli et al. 2022).

After the breeding season, populations from both Chile and Argentina migrate to the Patagonian Atlantic coast, where they are distributed northwards as far as Península Valdés, and occasionally further north to Buenos Aires Province (Wiersma & Kirwan 2020). In 2022, two juveniles were recorded for the first time in Uruguay (Castelli et al. 2022). Individuals generally start arriving at the breeding grounds in late August or early September and depart again in April–May.

At the end of the breeding season, individuals of the species often gather in flocks at a few Patagonian lagoons or coastal sites before migrating to their wintering grounds further north along the Atlantic coast. Most of the *Pluvianellus socialis* population migrates to the Atlantic coast during the non-breeding season, including juveniles. Small numbers may remain on the breeding grounds during winter (Wiersma & Kirwan 2020).



Summary of Activities:

The Concerted Action focuses on seven priority activities, the effective implementation of which will help recover the species in the short term and ensure its effective conservation in the long term.

1. Strengthen and sustain a binational monitoring program for the species.
2. Map priority habitats and sites in Patagonia.
3. Implement mechanisms for the protection and effective management of priority sites (public protected areas, private reserves, OECMs and others).
4. Promote and implement good productive practices in favor of the species' conservation.
5. Implement management and restoration of critical habitats.
6. Facilitate inter-institutional coordination between authorities at different levels (local, provincial, regional, national) for effective management.
7. Implement a binational working platform.

Associated benefits:

Pluvianellus socialis is a species restricted to Patagonia, using primarily the southern Patagonian steppe and the Atlantic coast. The southern Patagonian steppe provides innumerable benefits, habitat and sustenance to an extraordinary variety of animal and plant species, many of which are endangered, such as *Chloephaga rubidiceps* and *Podiceps gallardoi*.

The steppe has direct effects on ecological processes at landscape scale (pollination), regional scale (water cycle, regulating streamflow during the rainy season and sustaining it during dry seasons), and global scale (climate regulation and terrestrial carbon storage).

In terms of climate action, the steppe has demonstrated its importance as a carbon (C) sink. It is more reliable than some forest ecosystems, which are less resilient and more susceptible to current environmental changes. Its grasslands constitute one of the most economically viable buffers for combating climate change. The steppe ecosystem is one of the five ecosystems with the highest average Soil Organic Carbon (SOC) content, exceeding that found in lusher, greener landscapes such as arborescent scrub and sclerophyllous forests. 90% of the carbon in these ecosystems is stored below ground. Indeed, the grasslands of Chilean Patagonia contain as much or more SOC than forest soils, and store it for longer than Patagonian mixed forests. Globally, grassland restoration has been identified as the measure with the greatest potential for carbon sequestration, with a minimum contribution of 2.3 billion tons of CO_2eq per year, equivalent to the emission reduction of 580,000 wind turbines in one year. (Constanzo & Dougnac 2025).

A similar situation occurs along the Atlantic coast, due to its importance and role in natural protection from extreme events and as a refuge for biodiversity. Therefore, by conserving critical habitats for *Pluvianellus socialis*, we are safeguarding the provision of ecosystem services that are essential for human communities and for climate resilience (adaptation and mitigation).

Timeframe: The implementation horizon of this Concerted Action is four years, covering the period 2026–2030. A binational working group will monitor compliance with the proposed activities and evaluate them every two years. The group will report on progress to the CMS Scientific Council. The proposed activities have open participation: they may be implemented collaboratively by authorities (ministries, regional, provincial and/or municipal governments), managers, scientists and specialists from both countries, including NGOs and academia.

Relationship with other CMS ACTIONS: Because *Pluvianellus socialis* is listed in Appendix I, the necessary framework for binational cooperation was established, enabling this concerted action. Once evaluated on its merits after four years of implementation, it could evolve into an Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Chile and Argentina.

This concerted action is aligned, across the board, with the objectives and targets of the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species, and is framed within the Americas Flyways Framework, developed to support governments, non-profit organizations, research institutions, business and civil society in conserving migratory birds and their habitats across the Western Hemisphere. The framework covers all migratory birds of the Americas, including austral migrants, with particular attention to threatened and declining migratory species. The Concerted Action also provides a binational implementation mechanism for the Mid-continental Shorebird Conservation Initiative.

Conservation priority:

In December 2021, the Asociación Ambiente Sur (Argentina) and the Leñadura Bird Rehabilitation Centre (Chile), with support from Manomet Conservation Sciences, carried out the first binational census of the species during its breeding season. As a result, 180 sites were surveyed in Santa Cruz and Tierra del Fuego in Argentina, and in the Magallanes Region in Chile, where 264 individuals were recorded. During the non-breeding season, in May 2022, 65 wintering sites were surveyed with 300 individuals counted (55 juveniles). In the following years, 2023 and 2024, winter censuses were also carried out and the numbers recorded did not differ significantly from the initial estimates.

Internationally, until 2023, the species' population estimate, determined by BirdLife International, ranged between 1,500 and 7,000 individuals. This figure was largely based on field perception, without systematic census coverage. However, thanks to recent monitoring efforts and the evidence gathered, the species was finally recategorized as "Vulnerable" at global level (BirdLife, 2023).

In Argentina, the species has been categorized as Endangered (EN) at national level (Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development & Aves Argentinas, 2017) due to its small breeding population and evidence of declining quality of breeding habitat. For the national assessment (2015), it was assumed that the breeding population in Argentina could be small, fewer than 2,500 mature individuals with a continuous decline.

In Chile, according to Decree 16/2020 of the Ministry of the Environment, the species is considered Endangered (EN) C2a(i) due to its small population (less than 2,500 mature individuals), a continuous decline estimated from habitat loss due to the drying of lagoons used by the species, and the fact that no subpopulation is estimated to contain more than 250 mature individuals. This analysis used global Red List criteria applied at national level.

Among the direct threats to the small population of *Pluvianellus socialis* are nest trampling by livestock, disturbance by dogs, and the use of off-road vehicles on the shores of Patagonian lagoons (Ferrari et al. 2003, 2008; Lishman 2008). Indirect anthropogenic impacts include the degradation and desertification of the Patagonian steppe due to overgrazing and climate change. These factors may affect the stability of the semi-arid ecosystem and the chemistry of the lagoons used by the species for nesting (Lishman 2008). Reductions in annual rainfall attributed to climate change may negatively affect the species' annual breeding success (Lishman 2008).

Additionally, Patagonia (in Chile and Argentina) has drawn interest from companies aiming to produce green hydrogen and its derivatives based on wind power, which could potentially interfere with migratory routes of the species.

It is therefore one of the most threatened shorebird species in the world, with a critical population size, whose recovery depends largely on timely response and coordinated bilateral action between Chile and Argentina.

To share updated information on the conservation status of the species and its threats, and to propose and agree on priority actions, the first binational workshop organized by civil society took place in early May 2025 in Rio Gallegos, Santa Cruz, Argentina. The workshop brought together 26 people, including local authorities, managers, scientists, and specialists from Chile and Argentina. As a result of this collective work, the basis of a binational expert agenda for the recovery and conservation of the species was established.

While this binational expert working agenda is outside the remit of the CMS, the Concerted Action proposed by Chile and Argentina enables the main planned activities to be reviewed

and provides the necessary institutional and formal anchoring to enable implementation to proceed. This Concerted Action seeks to formalize this institutional work to facilitate information exchange, coordinate strategies and plans, and foster institutional cooperation between the range states of this endangered species. The concerted action will also allow for formal and periodic reporting to CMS on the measures adopted and their effectiveness.

Importance:

See above.

Absence of better remedies:

See above.

Readiness and feasibility: Both countries already have the necessary national frameworks in place to carry out the activities proposed in this Concerted Action. In Chile, this framework is the Action Plan for the Conservation of Shorebirds, approved by the Ministry of the Environment through Exempt Resolution No. 0597 on June 23, 2023. In Argentina, the framework is the National Plan for the Conservation of Shorebirds, approved by the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development through Resolution 409/2020. These instruments allow the Parties to fulfill their general CMS obligations.

Likelihood of success:

See below.

Magnitude of likely impact:

Successful implementation of the Concerted Action could have positive impact in three fundamental areas:

- More and better information available for decision-making: Improved data quality and monitoring across the species' range, increasing knowledge of population, migratory and ecological aspects and conservation barriers.
- Strengthened inter-institutional coordination: Improved management at local, national and bilateral levels.
- Safeguarding and management of priority sites: Implementation of mechanisms enabling effective conservation of critical sites and habitats for the species.

Cost effectiveness:

Although the financial investment required to implement the proposed activities has not yet been projected at the time of submitting this Concerted Action, and considering that this is one of the most threatened shorebird species in the world with an estimated population size of fewer than 1,000 individuals, it is possible to establish a preliminary notion of cost-effectiveness, particularly with regard to the recovery and maintenance of a viable population and the functional integrity of the habitats used throughout its annual life cycle. This cost-effectiveness hinges on various factors, including the ecological value and representativeness of the sites that can be secured or conserved (e.g., breeding, resting, and wintering areas), the costs of differential intervention and territorial management, the likelihood of successfully mitigating threats (e.g., human disturbance, habitat loss, and hydrological alterations), and the capacity of institutions to ensure the continuity of the measures in both countries.

Planned/ongoing consultations:

The Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informed and consulted with its Argentinian counterpart regarding the importance of this proposal. The Argentinian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has informally expressed its willingness to officially support the proposal once the CMS Secretariat formally requests it. It should also be noted that the need for binational actions to conserve *Pluvianellus socialis* has been addressed within the Argentina–Chile Environment Sub-Commission, a bilateral mechanism established under Article IV of the Treaty on the Environment between the Republic of Argentina and the Republic of Chile (1991). This forum is coordinated by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of both countries.

Activities and expected outcomes:

Activities	Outcomes	Time	Main collaborators	Resources
1. Create a bi-national Argentina–Chile working group	- Agree on key actors involved in decision-making.	2026	Public–private	Requires funding.
2. Standardize protocols and methodologies for monitoring and censusing *Pluvianellus socialis populations.* Argentina-Chile	• A monitoring protocol and program are established, applicable both in breeding and non-breeding seasons. • Objectives, scope, monitoring frequency, data collection and analysis methods, and relevant health criteria are defined. • Standardized and comparable information is generated between Argentina and Chile, • Coordination between key actors is strengthened for the effective implementation of the Action Plan.	2026	Public–private This is because there are several public and private groups conducting censuses and/or studies	Requires funding.
3. Strengthen and maintain the bi-national monitoring program.	- Increase winter censusing coverage. - 100% of priority sites for the species are monitored.	2027	Public–private There are several public and private groups conducting censuses and/or studies	Requires funding.

Activities	Outcomes	Time	Main collaborators	Resources
4. Mapping of habitats and priority *sites* in Patagonia.	- First version of the online map available for access by decision-makers.	2026	Public–private There are several public and private groups conducting censuses and/or studies	Requires human and technical resources.
5. Implement mechanisms for the protection and effective management of priority sites (public protected areas, private reserves, OECMs and others).	- At least 60% of the priority sites have a protection mechanism in place. - At least four public and/or private agreements reached.	2030	Binational Working Group	Requires funding, and human and technical resources.
6. Promote and implement best productive practices for the conservation of the species.	At least four private ranches implementing pilot management best practices.	2030	Binational Working Group	Requires funding, and human and technical resources.
6. Implement habitat management and restoration pilots.	At least five management and/or restoration actions implemented in critical habitats.	2030	Binational Working Group	Requires funding, and human and technical resources
7. Facilitate inter-institutional coordination	Effective and articulated management at various levels (local, provincial, regional, national)	2030	Binational Working Group	Requires human resources
8. Implement a binational working space.	The Chile–Argentina Working Group is launched	In progress	CMS National Committee of both countries or equivalent body	Human resources for coordination