PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF WILD ANIMALS

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Larus genei in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Charadriiformes
1.3. Familia	Laridae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	Larus genei Breme 1839 Monotypic

1.5. Common names

English:	Slender-billed Gull
Spanish:	Gaviota Picofina
French:	Goeland railleur

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

The species has a highly fragmented breeding distribution in southern Europe, North and West Africa and southwest Asia east to Pakistan and northwest India. Three largely discrete populations are identifiable: (i) a population which breeds in Mauritania and Senegal and winters east along the West African coast to the Gulf of Guinea; (ii) a population which breeds around the Black Sea and Mediterranean, and winters mainly in the Mediterranean (especially Egypt and Tunisia), with a few birds entering the Red Sea; (iii) a population which breeds in Kazakhstan, the Caspian Region, Iran and Iraq, and winters in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea east to northwest India.

2.2. Population

Three populations are recognized.
- West Africa: 10,000; increasing (Rose & Scott 1993).
- Black Sea/Mediterranean: 350,000; apparently stable.
- Southwest Asia (to northwest India): 150,000 (Rose & Scott 1993); increasing in India (T. Mundkur in litt.).

The breeding population in Mauritania and Senegal is estimated at about 3,000 pairs and is thought to be increasing; at the Banc d'Arguin in Mauritania, the population increased from 770-870 pairs in 1964 to 1,733 pairs in 1974 (Urban et al. 1986). Cooper et al. (1984) give a total of 2,850 pairs based on 1970s data: 1,750 pairs at the Banc d'Arguin, 1,000 pairs in the Senegal Delta, and 100 pairs in the Sine-Saloum Delta. A total of 733 was recorded in Senegal in January 1993 during the African Waterfowl Census (Taylor 1993).

Unpublished data suggest that the total breeding population in Europe is between 40,000 and 80,000 pairs, but numbers fluctuate widely, with

the breeding population in the Black Sea area alone exceeding 100,000 pairs in some years. A small numbers of pairs breed in North Africa: in Egypt (200-400 pairs), Tunisia (200 pairs) and Morocco (few) (Urban et al. 1986). Counts in winter in North Africa have included up to 15,000 in Tunisia, and 6,000 on the Port Said Lakes and 1,240 at Lake Qarun in Egypt (Urban et al. 1986).

Over 46,200 were recorded in Southwest Asia during the Asian Waterfowl Census of January 1992, mainly in Oman (31,700), Saudi Arabia (10,700) and Bahrain (2,200) (Perennou & Mundkur 1992). However, over 55,000 were recorded in Oman alone in 1991 (Perennou & Mundkur 1991), while aerial surveys in Iran in the 1970s gave a wintering population of 35,000-55,000, mainly along the south coast (Scott 1992). In the 1970s, the breeding population in Iran was estimated at 4,000-5,500 pairs (Scott 1992).

2.3. Habitat

During the breeding season, occurs in the Mediterranean, steppe and desert zones, largely along sheltered coasts of more or less land-locked seas. Nests colonially on islands and beaches of shallow coastal waters, coastal lagoons and salt-pans, on meadows and moist grassland by marine inlets, or on the shores of brackish or freshwater lagoons in extensive deltas and broad river valleys, often in association with colonies of terns. Outside the breeding season, entirely coastal and marine, occurring commonly on inshore waters off sandy beaches, but generally avoiding harbours and fishing villages; also feeds far out at sea (Cramp & Simmons 1983; Urban et al. 1986).

2.4. Migrations

Southern and western populations are dispersive, while northern and eastern populations are highly migratory. There is some dispersal of breeding birds from the West African breeding colonies, but their destination is unknown (Urban et al. 1986).

3. Threat data

3.1. Direct threats to the population

Predation on eggs by fishermen is reported to have been serious in Egypt and Senegal; in Egypt, the only known colony was wiped out by egg-collecting in 1979, while in Senegal the eggs are highly prized as a delicacy (Urban et al. 1986). The collection of eggs on the islets off Senegal has hopefully been reduced or eliminated since these islands were declared national parks (Cooper et al. 1984).

3.2. Habitat destruction

No information.

3.3. Indirect threats

The widespread application of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals in and around wetlands may be having a harmful effect on some populations. Pollution from agrochemicals may become a problem in

Senegal with the major agricultural developments in the deltas (Cooper et al. 1984). Permanently at risk from floating and beached oil, especially in the Persian Gulf.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

Collection of eggs for food.

4. Protection status and needs

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in all twelve member states of the EEC. In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Benin, Ethiopia, Gambia, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia.

4.2. International protection status

Larus genei is listed in Appendix II (strictly protected fauna) of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Berne Convention), and is also listed in Annex I of the EEC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC).

4.3. Additional protection needs

The West African and Black Sea/Mediterranean populations of Larus genei are listed in the category 'Localized' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds, because they are biogeographical populations which, although numerically stable or increasing, are restricted to only a few key sites during a part or the whole of their annual cycles. See attached note on additional protection needs for species and populations with an unfavourable conservation status.

5. Range States

See attached table.

6. Comments from Range States

7. Additional remarks

The West Asian population of Larus genei is also included in the Bonn Convention Draft Agreement on the Conservation of Asian-Australasian Migratory Waterbirds, as a substantial proportion of the population spends a part of its annual cycle in the Asian-Australasian Region.

8. References

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Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (1986). The Birds of Africa. Volume II. Academic Press, London & Orlando.

Taxon: *Larus genei*		
Population		
(a) W Africa		
(b) Black Sea/Mediterranean		
(c) SW Asia (to NW India)		
State	Pop.	Status
Austria	b	V
Azerbaijan	c	W
Bahrain	c	W
Benin	a	W
Bulgaria	b	W
Cote d'Ivoire	a	W
Egypt	b	Wr
Ethiopia	b	V
France	b	Srw
Gambia	a	Sr
Georgia	b	W
Germany	b	V
Ghana	a	W
Greece	b	Ws
Guinea	a	W
Guinea-Bissau	a	W
Iran	c	Wsr
Iraq	c	Swr
Israel	b	W
Italy	b	Wsr
Jordan	b	V
Kazakhstan	c	Swr
Kenya	b	V
Kuwait	c	W
Lebanon	b	V
Liberia	a	W
Libya	b	W
Mauritania	a	Sr
Morocco	b	W
Nigeria	a	W
Oman	c	W

Portugal	b	V
Qatar	c	W
Romania	b	Wsr
Russian Federation	b	Wsr
Saudi Arabia	c	W
Senegal	a	Sr
Sierra Leone	a	W
Spain	b	Srw
Togo	a	W
Tunisia	b	W
Turkey	b	Ws
Turkmenistan	c	Wsr
Ukraine	b	Wsr
United Arab Emirates	c	W
United Kingdom	b	V
Uzbekistan	c	S
Yemen	c	W

Key to Status	
S/s Breeding summer visitor	**R/r** Resident
W/w Winter visitor	**V** Vagrant
P/p Passage migrant	**?** Status uncertain
Upper case = primary status	**Lower case** = secondary status