



Joint Meeting of the Bern Convention Network of Special Focal Points on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds and the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean

(Bonn Germany, 13 to 15 May 2025)

UNEP/CMS/MIKT6/Doc.4.3.1

OVERVIEW REPORT FROM THE CMS SECRETARIAT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ROME STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2030: ERADICATING ILLEGAL KILLING, TAKING AND TRADE IN WILD BIRDS IN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION

(Prepared by the CMS Secretariat)

Summary:

This document outlines the main activities undertaken by the CMS Secretariat in supporting the implementation of 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 since June 2022.



The European Union was recognized as Champion Plus for their generous support and commitment towards addressing Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean for the period 2015 - 2028.



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



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Prepared in February 2025

By the CMS Secretariat

A. Introduction

1. This document provides an overview of the activities undertaken by the CMS Secretariat and more specifically the Coordinator of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) in support of the implementation of the [MIKT Workplan 2021-2025](#) and the [Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean Region \(RSP\)](#), since the last MIKT meeting in June 2022, including activities since COP14 in February 2024.

2. The mandate for the MIKT is provided through CMS [Resolution 11.16](#) (Rev.COP14) *The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds*. Resolution 11.16 was adopted in 2014 in COP11, and has since been amended and updated in COP12, COP13 and COP14. Additionally, the mandate is derived from the relevant Decisions. During COP14 (Samarkand, Uzbekistan; February 2024) the following Decisions were adopted, related to particular aspects of the MIKT work, e.g. [Decisions 14.119, 14.121](#) and [14.124](#) (as well as Decisions [14.120, 14.122-14.123](#) on mistnets).

These Decisions include provisions directed to Parties, Range States, the CMS Scientific Council, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), other stakeholders and the CMS Secretariat in aspects related to the implementation of the Rome Strategic Plan, the [Scoreboard to Assess the Progress in Combating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Wild Birds \(Scoreboard\)](#), and the production, sale, use, and regulation of mistnets.

3. For a report of activities until MIKT 5 in June 2022, please consult [Overview Report from the CMS Secretariat MIKT](#), submitted to the fourth Joint IKB meeting in 2022, and document [Overview Report from the CMS Secretariat on MIKT](#), submitted to the third Joint IKB meeting in 2021.

4. The MIKT Workplan 2021-2025 and the Rome Strategic Plan have been contributing to the achievement and implementation of:

- Resolution 11.2 [Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2015-2023](#); and since CMS COP14 to the implementation of Resolution 14.1 [Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032](#).
- CMS [Resolution 11.16 \(Rev.COP14\) The Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds](#);
- the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly [SDG 15 Life on Land](#), which is related to biodiversity and sets a target to take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna, and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products;
- the implementation of the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), especially Target 5;
- the EU Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (COM (2020) 380 final) [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.

5. As of February 2025, the Membership of the Task Force consists of 21 CMS Parties and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union. Additionally, three Interested Parties (CMS Parties which do not have a Mediterranean coast), and one Non-Party are Observers to the MIKT. Twelve multilateral environmental agreements (represented by their Secretariats), organizations and networks, and ten non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

are Observers to MIKT. The Vulture Conservation Foundation, a long-time, implementing partner for many activities related to IKB, formally requested to be added to the list of International NGO Observers, thus bringing the total number of International NGOs to ten. Focal points in eight advisory bodies provide advice to the MIKT as needed. A list of all Members and Observers is available on the [CMS MIKT website](#).

6. Geographic Scope of the Rome Strategic Plan

The geographic scope of the RSP includes 57 countries and the European Union (countries in **bold** are Members of the MIKT, countries in *italics* are Observers to the MIKT, the rest are parties to the Bern Convention): **Albania, Algeria**, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, **Croatia, Cyprus**, Czech Republic, Denmark, **Egypt**, Estonia, **European Union**, Finland, **France**, Georgia, *Germany*, **Greece**, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, **Israel, Italy**, *Jordan*, Latvia, **Lebanon, Libya**, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, **Malta**, Moldova, **Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco**, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, *Portugal*, North Macedonia, Romania, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, **Slovenia, Spain**, Sweden, Switzerland, **Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Turkey**, Ukraine, **United Kingdom**.

B. MIKT meetings

7. Meetings of the Task Force

The [fifth Meeting of MIKT](#) (and fourth Joint Meeting of the MIKT and the Bern Convention Special Focal Points on IKB(SFPs)) took place between 7-9 June 2022, in Valencia, Spain in hybrid format, hosted by the Spanish Government and Generalitat Valenciana. The meeting was attended by 120 people, of which 50 attended online. Participants at the meeting exchanged updates and shared best practice. They were also informed about a document on Good Practices for preventing IKB and about the ongoing work to develop Recommendations for the development and implementation of National IKB Action Plans and Guidance, which have since been endorsed. Additionally, they were informed about a draft outline of guidance that was prepared by BirdLife on advice on surveying motivations, drivers and modus operandi behind IKB. More details about MIKT5 can be found in the [Meeting Report](#).

The [sixth Meeting of MIKT](#) (and fifth Joint Meeting of the MIKT and the Bern Convention SFPs) is scheduled to take place at the United Nations Campus in Bonn, Germany and online (hybrid format) between 13-15 May 2025.

8. Meetings of the MIKT Consultative Group

The MIKT Consultative Group is an informal advisory body to share views and provide advice on specific issues as defined in the MIKT [modus operandi](#). The Group meetings are open to all interested members and observers and are usually held online.

The [Consultative Group](#) includes the following organizations:

- EU Commission;
- Bern Convention Secretariat;
- AEWAS Secretariat;
- Raptors MOU Secretariat;
- Chair of the African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds Action Plan (AEMLAP);
- Chair of the CMS Scientific Council;

- BirdLife International;
- European Hunters Federation (FACE).

The Consultative Group met twice once in 2024 (in April and in July 2024), in order to prepare and agree the agenda for the next CMS MIKT and Bern Convention Joint Meeting on IKB (MIKT6). Several MIKT members participated in the meetings.

C. MIKT Workplan and Coordination

9. The MIKT Workplan 2021-2025 and the Rome Strategic Plan

The below report of activities by the CMS Secretariat follows the structure of the Rome Strategic Plan.

Process Oriented Objective: National IKB Action Plans

10. National IKB Action Plans (NAPs)

Following MIKT5, in June 2022, members were consulted by email and endorsed a document prepared by Carmen Naves Muñoz and reviewed by the CMS Secretariat, titled [Guidance for the Development and Implementation of National Action Plans against the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Birds](#). The document implements Action 1. a) under the objective National IKB Action Plans of the Rome Strategic Plan.

Following the endorsement of the Guidance above, the CMS Secretariat organized a [regional workshop on development and implementation of National Action Plans](#). The workshop took place 2-4 September 2024 in Podgorica, Montenegro, co-organised by the Government of Montenegro. The workshop was addressed to Balkan countries and was attended by 38 experts from Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. More details can be found in the [Meeting Report](#).

Result Oriented Objectives:

Objective 1: To understand the scope, scale and motivations behind illegal killing, taking and trade of birds;

11 Guidance and best practice on monitoring motivations for IKB

Following MIKT5, members were consulted by email and endorsed a document prepared by BirdLife International, titled [Suggested Methodology and Guidance for Conducting Socio-Economic Research into the Motivations Behind Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Birds](#). The document implements Action 1.2a) under the Objective 1, on understanding the scope, scale and motivations behind IKB.

12. Furthermore, in early 2025, the CMS Secretariat signed an agreement with BirdLife International, to deepen the work on understanding motivations and contribute to Actions 1.2 (a), (c) and (d) through conducting a survey on motivations for IKB. The survey will target MIKT members and observers in Mediterranean countries, as well as Republic of Türkiye and Serbia. It will be based on the Suggested Methodology and Guidance referred to above. The contract was launched in March 2025 and will conclude in April 2026.

Objective 2: To establish an active prevention of the illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds;

13. In 2023, the European Commission published a guide which contributes to the Prevention Objective of the RSP. MIKT members and Bern Convention SFPs had been consulted about the guide and had the opportunity to offer comments and case studies. The draft guide was presented at MIKT5 in Valencia by the European Commission. The guide was published in 2023 and is titled [Combatting the illegal killing, taking of and trade in birds in the EU](#).

14. Contributing to the Prevention Objective, the MIKT Coordinator participated in a number of meetings and conferences showcasing the work of MIKT. As an example, the MIKT Coordinator participated in the 3rd Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MOU from 3 to 6 July 2023, in Dubai, UAE. The Coordinator presented the Strategic Framework of MIKT and the various guidance documents developed as part of the work of the Task Force.

15. The MIKT Coordinator co-organised and participated in a side event on ‘Global Illegal Taking of Birds’, which took place on 14 February 2024, during the CMS COP14 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. During the event the MIKT Coordinator presented the work of MIKT, including strategy, priorities and best practice, in the well-attended event.

16. Additionally, the MIKT Coordinator participated in two international meetings and promoted the work of MIKT, highlighting best practice examples and guidance developed by MIKT. These were: a working group meeting on Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds in South-West Asia, which took place in January 2024 in Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) and a meeting on Illegal Trade of Migratory Birds especially in the Middle East, which took place in Amman, Jordan in 23-26 April 2024.

17. Furthermore, the MIKT Coordinator participated and presented the work of MIKT, in a hybrid workshop organised by UNEP in Lebanon together with the Government of Lebanon, regarding the situation with illegal killing of migratory birds in Lebanon, which took place on 15 May 2024. The MIKT Coordinator and other CMS Avian Team staff also participated in a follow up online meeting on 21 May 2024.

18. Finally, the MIKT Coordinator participated in a well-attended, Wildlife Crime Conference organised by NGO BirdLife Cyprus and the Vulture Conservation Foundation in Cyprus, on 22-24 May 2024. The MIKT Coordinator delivered a speech in the ‘Setting the scene’ part of the programme.

19. Further contributing to the Prevention Objective, the CMS Secretariat has commenced work on an outreach toolkit in four languages (English, French, Spanish and Arabic) targeted mainly to government agencies, such as conservation agencies, enforcement bodies, and national communication offices, NGOs and Observers from Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs). Work is expected to take place during 2025-2026.

Objective 3: To ensure that the illegal killing of birds is addressed effectively and efficiently in national legislation;

20. Following the endorsement of the [Legislative Guidance](#) and [Model Law examples](#) documents at MIKT5, the CMS Secretariat plans to organize an online Webinar in the summer of 2025 with Professor Erica Lyman from the Global Law Alliance for Animals and the Environment, of the Lewis & Clark Law School team, who worked with the CMS Secretariat in 2022 on the two guides. The Webinar will be recorded and made available online in the Rome Strategic Plan webpage as an additional tool to support the documents.

21. Reporting on IKB Action: The Scoreboard

Following the adoption of a paper on the [future periodic reporting in MIKT4](#) (Joint Meeting in June 2021), the Bern Convention Secretariat, together with the MIKT Coordinator, prepared a

proposal on instructions for additional narrative reporting for the 2023 Scoreboard exercise. This additional narrative reporting was included as recommended answers, after endorsement by MIKT members during MIKT5.

Assessing progress through the Scoreboard is the main means of assessment mentioned in the Rome Strategic Plan. The Scoreboard exercise of 2023, the 3rd such exercise, ran from April to July 2023. In total 25 countries responded, and the results were analysed and presented at the [43rd Standing Committee of the Bern Convention](#) in December 2023. As an additional three countries submitted their contributions to the Scoreboard after the deadline, their results have been integrated into an updated analysis of contributions to the 2023 Scoreboard. The updated analysis is to be presented for discussion in the Joint CMS MIKT and Bern Convention IKB meeting in May 2025, where the next Scoreboard exercise of 2026 would also be announced.

22. The Bern Convention created a dedicated page for the original Scoreboard data as submitted by the countries in 2022. Countries were asked to provide their agreement for uploading their original answers and the answers were uploaded, for those that provided their agreement. Similarly with 2018 and 2020, also in 2023, original answers have been uploaded online in the specialized [webpage](#) hosted by the Bern Convention, for those countries that agreed to share their answers.

23. Website updates and social media

The CMS Secretariat has maintained the [MIKT website](#). Towards the end of 2023, a new section was launched on the MIKT website, which is [dedicated to the Rome Strategic Plan](#), and structured around its objectives, providing in an easy-to-access location key documents and guidance endorsed by MIKT members, as well as other documents of interest.

Furthermore, [a webpage was created for MIKT6](#) and for all the CMS meetings mentioned in the report.

D. MIKT Coordination

24. MIKT Coordination

The CMS Secretariat, with generous support by the European Union, contracted a consultant as MIKT Coordinator. The consultant, Dr Claire (Foteini) Papazoglou, from Cyprus, has been under contract during the periods from 1 February to 31 July 2023, and from 1st January 2024 to 30 June 2024, and is currently on contract from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2026.

During the contract breaks in 2023, MIKT Coordination was undertaken by Dr Nora Weyer (JPO/P2) working in the CMS Avian Species Team.

E. Funding

25. During 2024, an additional phase of funding was agreed by the European Union, through the NDICI Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA) III between the Commission and UNEP. The NDICI funding started in March 2024 and will expire on 30 June 2028. Funding is provided for the Coordination of MIKT, as well as Meetings and Implementation of key activities of the Rome Strategic Plan. COP14 extended the recognition of the European Union as a Champion Plus for their generous contribution towards the implementation of MIKT.

26. Recommended action:

The CMS MIKT Members and the Bern Convention Network of SFPs on Eradication of Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade in Wild Birds are recommended to:

- a) review this document, as appropriate.
- b) take note of this document.