

Notification 2026/016

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## NOTIFICATION TO THE PARTIES

### **Addressing Illegal and/or Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species: Strategic Needs Assessment Questionnaire**

At its Fifteenth Meeting (COP15), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) established the Global Initiative on Taking of Migratory Species (GTI) to strengthen international cooperation in addressing the illegal and/or unsustainable taking of migratory species. Through Decision 15.195 (a), the Secretariat was requested to develop a more integrated approach to effectively support Parties in addressing pressures from illegal and/or unsustainable taking of migratory species. To support this work, the Secretariat is undertaking a Strategic Needs Assessment. This questionnaire in Annex I forms part of that Assessment and builds on:

- the Review of Cross-cutting Aspects (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.28.1/Annex 1), which identifies opportunities to better coordinate existing CMS initiatives, work programmes, action plans and guidance related to illegal and unsustainable taking;
- the GTI Scoping Analysis (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.28.1/Annex 2), which reviews the current understanding of the scale and drivers of illegal and unsustainable taking, existing measures, examples of good practice and priority capacity needs, and identifies recommendations for a more comprehensive assessment; and
- existing information contained in CMS National Reports, published literature, previous assessments and expert knowledge.

Responses to this questionnaire will contribute to the Strategic Needs Assessment, which aims to:

- identify priority migratory species, geographic areas and implementation needs;
- assess the scale, trends, drivers and impacts of illegal and/or unsustainable taking, with particular attention to domestic drivers and responses;
- identify strengths, gaps and implementation challenges in existing national legislation, policies and institutional frameworks;
- identify priorities for technical assistance, capacity-building and international cooperation;
- inform the development of national and regional strategies and other implementation tools under the GTI; and

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- inform priorities for the GTI intersessional work programme.

The Secretariat kindly invites Parties to complete and return the questionnaire in Annex I by **October 30, 2026**. Parties are encouraged to consult relevant national authorities, scientific institutions and other stakeholders, as appropriate, in preparing their response.

Completed questionnaires, and any queries regarding this Notification, should be sent to the CMS Secretariat at [tatjana.rosen@un.org](mailto:tatjana.rosen@un.org).

## Annex I

### Section 1. Priority Species and Geographic Focus

#### 1. Which CMS-listed migratory species (or taxa, or other groups of species) should be considered priorities for action under the GTI in your country or region?

For each priority species or taxon/group, please describe:

- 1 the main forms of illegal and/or unsustainable taking;
- 2 the principal threats and conservation concerns associated with such taking;
- 3 the reasons why action is considered a priority;
- 4 whether the issue is primarily national, transboundary or flyway/population-wide;
- 5 whether the taking is for strictly domestic use or has an international trade component; and
- 6 the main implementation needs (e.g. improved legislation, enforcement, monitoring, community engagement, awareness-raising or international cooperation).

| Species | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|         |   |   |   |   |   |   |

#### 2. Which geographic areas, migration routes or transboundary landscapes (within your country or region, or within the migratory route of the species) should be considered priorities for GTI implementation?

Please explain:

- 1 why these areas are priorities;
- 2 the main forms of illegal and/or unsustainable taking occurring in these areas;
- 3 whether the issues are primarily domestic or transboundary; and
- 4 any key implementation challenges.

| Priority | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|----------|---|---|---|---|
|          |   |   |   |   |
|          |   |   |   |   |
|          |   |   |   |   |
|          |   |   |   |   |

**3. Are there important information or knowledge gaps that limit your ability to assess or address illegal and/or unsustainable taking?**

Please describe any gaps relating to:

- 1 priority species or populations;
- 2 priority geographic areas or migration routes;
- 3 the scale, trends or drivers of illegal and/or unsustainable taking;
- 4 the effectiveness of existing responses; or
- 5 monitoring, research or data collection.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |

**Section 2. Scale and Trends**

**4. What information is currently available to assess the scale, trends and characteristics of illegal and/or unsustainable taking of the priority migratory species identified in Section 1?**

| Species |  |
|---------|--|
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |

Please describe the principal sources of information, such as:

- monitoring programmes;

- scientific studies;
- law enforcement and judicial data;
- community-based monitoring, traditional or local knowledge;
- expert observations; and
- other relevant sources.

***Where possible, please comment on the reliability, geographic coverage and any significant limitations of the available information.***

**5. Based on the available evidence, have patterns of illegal and/or unsustainable taking changed in recent years?**

If so, please describe:

- 1 the main trends observed;
- 2 the principal drivers of these changes;
- 3 whether changes relate primarily to illegal taking, unsustainable taking, or both; and
- 4 whether the changes are occurring at the national, transboundary or flyway/population level.

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| <b>1</b> |  |
| <b>2</b> |  |
| <b>3</b> |  |
| <b>4</b> |  |

### **Section 3. Drivers and/or Motivations**

**6. What are the principal drivers and/or motivations of illegal and/or unsustainable taking of the species you have identified?**

| <b>Species</b> | <b>Drivers and/or motivations</b> |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|
|                |                                   |
|                |                                   |
|                |                                   |
|                |                                   |

*Examples may include:*

- *Commercial gain: Illegal taking for income or financial profit through the sale of wildlife or wildlife products.*
- *Household consumption: Illegal taking for food, traditional medicine or other subsistence use within the household.*
- *Protection of people or property: Illegal taking to protect people, livestock, crops, property or other natural resources perceived to be under threat.*
- *Traditional rights: Illegal taking motivated by the belief that traditional access or customary harvesting rights have been unfairly restricted.*
- *Disagreement with regulations: Illegal taking in deliberate non-compliance with laws or regulations perceived as unjust or inappropriate.*
- *Recreational purposes: Illegal taking for the enjoyment or satisfaction associated with hunting or fishing.*
- *Status or identity: Illegal taking motivated by social status, prestige, cultural identity or personal reputation.*
- *Gamesmanship: Illegal taking motivated by the challenge of evading or outsmarting law enforcement.*
- *Rebellion or protest: Illegal taking as an expression of resistance or opposition to authorities or government policies.*

#### **Section 4. Conservation Impacts**

##### **7. What are the most significant impacts of illegal and/or unsustainable taking on migratory species identified and their populations?**

| <b>Species</b> |  |
|----------------|--|
|                |  |
|                |  |
|                |  |
|                |  |

*Examples include:*

- *Species population decline*
- *Habitat destruction*
- *Local extirpation*
- *Harm to food security of local and Indigenous communities*

- *Ecosystem impacts*
- *Impacts on predator or prey populations*

**8. What wider ecological, economic or social consequences have resulted from illegal and/or unsustainable taking?**

Please consider impacts on ecosystem functioning, ecosystem services and local livelihoods (including cultural practices, food security, etc.) where relevant.

**Section 5. Current National Response**

**9. What policies, legislation, management measures or conservation programmes currently in place to address illegal and/or unsustainable taking of the species identified in this questionnaire have been particularly successful or not?**

**Section 6. Implementation Needs**

**10. What requires the greatest strengthening to effectively address illegal and/or unsustainable taking of the species identified (in your country)?**

| Species |  |
|---------|--|
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |

*Examples may include:*

- *legislation and policy;*
- *governance and enforcement*
- *monitoring*
- *scientific research*
- *data management*
- *judiciary*
- *community engagement*
- *transboundary cooperation*
- *institutional coordination*
- *training*

**11. Which sectors, institutions or stakeholders should be actively involved for the species identified?**

| Species |  |
|---------|--|
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |
|         |  |

**12. What forms of technical assistance or international support would be most valuable to your country?**

### **Section 7. Enforcement and Monitoring**

**13. What are the principal strengths and weaknesses of the current enforcement system in your country?**

*For example:*

- *detection;*
- *intelligence gathering;*
- *investigations;*
- *prosecution;*
- *judiciary;*
- *customs;*
- *border controls;*
- *ranger capacity;*
- *inter-agency cooperation.*

**14. How is illegal and/or unsustainable taking currently monitored and assessed (you can answer generally, taxon-specifically or biome specific)?**

**15. What additional monitoring approaches, indicators or technologies would improve implementation?**

### **Section 8. National Strategy Development**

**16. Does your country currently have a national strategy, action plan or equivalent framework addressing illegal and/or unsustainable taking of migratory species?**

**17. If YES, what are its principal strengths, weaknesses and implementation challenges?**

18. If your country were to develop or update a national strategy to address illegal and/or unsustainable taking of migratory species, what would be its top three priorities?

### Section 9. National Scoreboard

19. Are you familiar with any of the following:

- CMS Illegal Killing of Birds Scoreboard YES/NO
- ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit and Indicator Framework YES/NO
- Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) Scoreboard YES/NO

20. Would a national self-assessment Scoreboard be a useful tool to support the implementation of national and regional measures addressing illegal taking of migratory species (e.g. a national strategy, CMS Action Plan, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), or other CMS species or regional initiative)? Why or why not?

*A Scoreboard could provide a simple, periodic self-assessment of national progress, help identify implementation gaps and priorities, facilitate reporting, and inform requests for technical support.*

*For example, it could assess progress in areas such as:*

- **Governance and planning** (e.g. national strategy adopted, coordination mechanism established);
- **Legislation and policy** (e.g. adequate legal protection for priority migratory species);
- **Knowledge and monitoring** (e.g. monitoring programme established, illegal take incidents recorded, population trends available);
- **Threat assessment** (e.g. priority species, drivers and high-risk areas identified);
- **Enforcement** (e.g. ranger capacity, inter-agency cooperation, intelligence-led enforcement);
- **Judiciary and prosecution** (e.g. effective investigation and prosecution of wildlife crime);
- **Community engagement** (e.g. awareness programmes, conflict mitigation, community participation);
- **Technology and innovation** (e.g. SMART, camera traps, AI, drones or other technologies supporting monitoring and enforcement);
- **International cooperation** (e.g. information sharing, joint monitoring, transboundary collaboration); and
- **Monitoring and evaluation** (e.g. periodic review of implementation and adaptive management).

*A simple scoring system (for example, 0 = not initiated, 1 = planned, 2 = partially implemented, 3 = fully implemented, 4 = fully implemented and regularly evaluated) could allow countries to monitor progress over time.*

**In your view:**

- Would such a Scoreboard be useful?

- Which elements would provide the greatest value?
- What concerns or limitations should be considered in its design?

**21. Would a Global Strategy to Address Illegal and/or Unsustainable Taking of Migratory Species be a useful framework to guide national and regional implementation? Why or why not?**