

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of the European turtle-dove (*Streptopelia turtur turtur*) in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of Senegal

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1	Class	Aves
1.2	Order	Columbiformes
1.3	Family	Columbidae
1.4	Genus/species	<i>Streptopelia turtur turtur</i>
1.5	Common name	Tourterelle des bois or Tourterelle européenne

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

This Palearctic species of European turtle doves (*Streptopelia turtur turtur*) has a range covering low and middle altitude regions with intensive agriculture, where isolated wooded formations are to be found (forests, copses, hedges, scrubland, arid Mediterranean scrublands, etc.)

2.2 Range

Its breeding range comprises, for *Streptopelia turtur turtur* the Canary Islands, Europe, Turkey, the Caspian region and south-western Siberia (Kazakhstan). The sandy subspecies is present in Western North Africa, the Balearic Islands, Libya, the Middle East, Iran, western Altai and Simbiang. Captures in tropical Africa of birds ringed in Europe, show that the populations from the westernmost section of Europe (United Kingdom, Belgium, Netherlands, western Germany, France, Spain, and Portugal), and from Morocco, winter in Senegambia and West Mali.

3. Threats

The birds are in high demand from hunters, who catch large numbers (583 000 individuals caught during the authorised hunting period). Besides, poaching in the Médoc area, during the month of May, of groups of birds before the breeding migration, causes the loss of at least another 35 000 turtle doves from the French, British, Belgian, and Dutch populations.

The species is also hunted in spring, in Morocco, where some 100 000 to 140 000 birds are estimated to be caught. In their wintering grounds, the birds are also shot at in large numbers, though we are not in a position to provide precise estimates. Thus, heavy hunting, together with a loss produced by the unfavourable wintering conditions, probably results in a very marked decline of nesting (Jarry, 1993).

In its wintering areas in the southern Sahara (Senegal, Mali), birds are mostly caught where they concentrate most (sleeping grounds and water points). These takings are destined for consumption, the birds being sold in traditional villages and weekly markets. Systematic deforestation of the mimosa tree, which is a natural sleeping place for the species, contributes to this outcome. These spiky vegetal formations, the birds' preferred areas, on account of the protection they offer, are razed to the ground for charcoal making. Obviously, the birds have to leave.

It should be emphasized that the species has an exceptional rank within the family Columbidae (Pigeons and turtledoves) as the species that migrates farthest. It is also interesting to point out another exceptional characteristic: it is the only species that feeding almost exclusively on grains, migrates across the Sahara.

The species has been listed for several years now by the CEE as having a vulnerable status, and is the object of studies and conservation plans within the application framework of directive 79/409/CEE on wild birds.

Birdlife International (the old International Council for the Preservation of Birds) classifies the birds as a vulnerable species in need of particular attention.

CONCLUSION

The species, very gregarious, has particular requirements in order to ensure appropriate conditions for its wintering season: a great abundance of grain from wild or cultivated plants in a clear, unrestricted ground area, the presence of fresh waters, and also of forests of spiny trees (*Acacia*), in order to gather there to sleep, protected from predators; and, finally, leafy trees that will protect it from the burning sun during the hottest hours of the day. All these factors constitute the basic ecological parameters for this species. There should be no hunting either.

The species is extremely sensitive to loud explosions, to the extent of leaving any area where shooting takes place. Senegal is, for the time being, the reception territory for the largest part of the population, which includes also birds coming from Morocco, and no doubt Algeria too. A very limited number of recaptured individuals, both in Senegal and in Europe, is proof of this.

In conclusion of all that has been stated, it should seem that the species satisfies the main criteria for listing in Annex II to the CMS. The species is migratory in the sense of the Convention, and should benefit from cooperation in matters of research and conservation measures.