



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

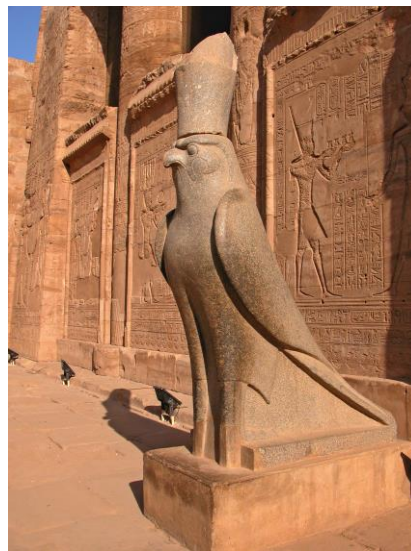
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First Meeting of the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean

Meeting Report

Cairo, Egypt, 12 – 15 July 2016



This activity has been kindly sponsored by the European Commission through the Global Public Goods and Challenges (GPGC Programme) Cooperation Agreements with UNEP

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ACRONYMS

AEWA	African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement
AMCEN	African Ministerial Conference
BMUB	Bundesministerium für Umwelt, Naturschutz, Bau und Reaktorsicherheit
CABS	Committee against Bird Slaughter
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CEN	Custom Enforcement Network
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of the Parties
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
EU	European Union
EC	European Commission
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
ENEC	European Network against Environmental Crime
ENPE	European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment
EUFJE	EU Network of Judges for the Environment
FACE	European Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IAF	International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey
ICCWC	International Consortium on Combatting Wildlife Crime
IKB	Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds
IMPEL	European Union Network for the Implementation and Enforcement of Environmental Law
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWC	International Waterbird Census
LIFE	EU funding instrument for the environment and climate action

MIKT	Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NABU	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan
NCE	Nature Conservation Egypt
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
POW	Programme of Work
RAC/SPA	Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicles
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WCO	World Customs Organization
WG	Working Group

Opening remarks

1. Borja Heredia (UNEP CMS Secretariat) opened the meeting explaining some of the background of the Task Force, the origins of which were the resolution passed at CMS COP11 in Quito. He thanked the European Commission for the funding, which had enabled the Secretariat to appoint a coordinator, Carmen Naves.
2. Mr. Heredia noted that there were parallel processes under way under other fora, such as the Council of Europe's Bern Convention which had adopted the Tunis Action Plan.
3. The meeting was scheduled to last three days, with the first two dedicated to the whole Mediterranean region and the third concentrating on the situation in Egypt. It was envisaged that the meeting would develop a programme of work and adopt the Cairo Declaration. There would also be a field trip on the day after the conclusion of the meeting.
4. The CMS Secretariat would service the meeting and in addition to Mr. Heredia was represented by Carmen Naves, Ximena Cancino, responsible for administration and logistics, and Robert Vagg, the report writer.
5. Mr. Heredia concluded his remarks by thanking the Egyptian Government for hosting the meeting and the Cairo Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the support it had provided concerning logistics.
6. Moustafa Fouda (Egypt), the National Focal Point for CMS, welcomed the participants to Cairo. He said that bird hunting was not a new phenomenon and it had been well regulated in the past. Recent developments had made it a serious problem necessitating the establishment of the Task Force. The problem was not confined to the Mediterranean, as it was occurring in other flyways worldwide.
7. The meeting had an ambitious agenda for the available time.
8. Ahmed Abou Elseoud Ahmed (CEO of the EEAA) gave a welcoming address on behalf of the Environment Minister of Egypt, Dr Khaled Fahmy. He pointed out that the Ancient Egyptians were the first society to regulate hunting, and environmental management was not the responsibility of the EEAA and hunting was subject to a number of laws, including Law 102/1983 which prohibited taking animals in Protected Areas. Mr. Elseoud said that Egypt was responding to the threats posed by illegal killing of birds by raising in the forum of the AMCEN and at UNEA, and by collaborating with local NGOs. The assistance provided by BirdLife International was greatly appreciated. The Minister was looking forward to hearing the recommendations of the meeting for the next steps.
9. Dr Fahmy, later made an appearance in order to welcome delegates to the meeting personally. After making a brief statement, he was presented with a copy of the book

“Survival”. He said that he was looking forward to receiving the recommendations of the meeting and that they would be implemented.

Appointment of Chair and vice-Chair of the Task Force, introduction of participants and adoption of the agenda and meeting schedule.

10. Mr. Heredia said that the Secretariat proposed in accordance with usual practice under CMS that a representative of the host country serve as Chair of the meeting and suggested that Mr. Fouda preside over the meeting. There were no objections and Mr. Fouda was elected by acclamation.
11. Mr. Heredia proposed that Sergei Golovkin (Malta) who was chairing the parallel process under the Bern Convention be elected as Vice–Chair. Mr. Golovkin too was elected by acclamation.
12. Before ceding the chair to Mr. Fouda, Mr. Heredia explained that the guiding document for the meeting was the annotated agenda, which had been made available as document UNEP/CMS/MIKT1/doc 2a. This agenda and the associated schedule were adopted.
13. The Chair invited all participants to introduce themselves and a tour de table was conducted. A list of all participants at the meeting can be found as Annex X of this report. The chair pointed out that some participants would be joining the meeting later and some would take part remotely through Skype connections.

Discussion and adoption of the Modus Operandi of the Task Force.

14. Mr. Heredia was invited to introduce this item and he referred the meeting to document UNEP/CMS/MIKT1/Doc 3. He proposed that as a technical body, the Task Force should work by consensus.
15. It was also proposed that a small consultative group (akin to a bureau) should be established to provide advice between meetings and monitor progress. In the interests of economy, this bureau would operate through telecommunication and would only meet physically if suitable opportunities arose.
16. Nicola Crockford (BirdLife International) thanked the Secretariat for having prepared the document, noting that it drew widely from the resolution. She had a number of small amendments to propose. She thought that the description of the role of the Task Force should be expanded beyond facilitating to include catalyzing, supporting and monitoring. She also proposed changes to the section on targets and setting priorities and she felt that, under the reference to the Tunis Action Plan of the Bern Convention, further clarification was needed on the geographic scope of the Task Force.

17. Marita Arvela (European Commission) pointed out that in the section concerning membership the European Union had been omitted. She also said that some drafting changes were required to reflect that certain planned actions had now taken place.
18. No further comments were made, so subject to the changes requested by BirdLife International and the European Commission the modus operandi was adopted.

Introduction to UNEP/CMS Resolution 11.16 on the “Prevention of Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds”

19. Ms. Naves (UNEP/CMS Task Force Coordinator) gave a presentation, describing the background to the Convention, which had first been suggested at the *United Nations Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment* 1972 in Stockholm as an instrument to be created. The Government of Germany had led the negotiations and the text was agreed 1979 in Bonn (hence the alternative name “Bonn Convention”) and the Convention entered into force in 1983. The membership would reach 124 on 1 August 2016, with strong representation in the Mediterranean region, where the only countries not Party were Bosnia-Herzegovina, Lebanon and Turkey.
20. Resolution 11.31 had been adopted at the Conference of Parties (COP) in Quito in 2014 and wildlife trade had been recognized as being a major threat, alongside the illicit trade in drugs and armaments, and was a source of revenue for terrorists and organized criminals (Mafia-style gangs operating in the Balkans were generating €10 million a year through smuggling illegally shot birds to Italy with no benefit to local communities). It threatened both sustainable use and human lives and livelihoods such as eco-tourism, as well as causing environmental damage.
21. The Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT) had been set up by the Resolution to be led by CMS along with the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (AEWA) and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia, the Action Plans for African-Eurasian Migratory Landbirds and the Bern Convention.
22. Appreciation was expressed to the European Commission, which had provided funding to allow MIKT to start operating. The Task Force had 20 members from CMS Parties and 34 observers from other countries (Parties and non-Parties), CITES, INTERPOL, UNEP, UNODC, NGOs and hunters’ organizations.
23. The illegal killing of birds (IKB) in the Mediterranean had reached alarming levels recently. There were reports dating back to 1979 and 1991, as well as the more recent study, “The Killing”, published by BirdLife International, which estimated that between 11 million and 36 million birds were being illegally taken each year in the Mediterranean region alone. The

methods used included shooting, nets and lime sticks and the reasons for taking included for food and trade.

24. The first meeting of the MIKT has the task of agreeing the Programme of Work (POW) for the period 2016-2020 and finalizing the text of the Cairo Declaration. One of the Task Force's principal responsibilities would be to ensure that monitoring was stepped up and trends examined.
25. The 2016 World Migratory Bird Day campaign had focussed on stopping the illegal killing of birds under the slogan "*and when the skies fall silent?*" A total of 316 events had been registered in 85 countries, and a benefit concert had been organized in Bonn, which had raised €1,800 for the activities of the Task Force.
26. It was highlighted the importance of the work of MIKT to tackle the problem of IKB in the Mediterranean but also because it will serve as an inspiration to be replicated in other regions.
27. The slides making up Ms Naves' presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Results of BirdLife International's review of the scale and extent of illegal killing and taking of birds in the Mediterranean

28. Before starting this agenda item, Mr. Heredia welcomed the UNDP representative, Amany Nakhla, to the meeting and thanked her for the logistical support provided by her organization.
29. The Chair called upon Ms. Crockford (Birdlife International) to give a presentation on the BirdLife International review of the scale and extent of illegal killing of birds in the Mediterranean. She said that she thought that the MIKT as a ground-breaking group and that the BirdLife International review provided some baseline data upon which to build.
30. IKB was a growing threat and countries were struggling to deal with it. Quantitative data were needed on the number of birds affected and the worst areas for illegal taking needed to be identified. The review covered 26 countries in the region (the only not covered was Libya). Country factsheets had been posted on the data zone of the BirdLife International website.
31. National experts had been asked to provide information, and the review was based on the data supplied which were the best available. It was recognized that the data might not be perfect and the review should be regarded as a work in progress. Also important was agreement on the definition of "illegal killing".

32. The review contained results for all species and it was estimated that between 11 million and 36 million birds were being taken illegally in the Mediterranean region. The only territories reporting that illegal killing, taking and trade were not serious problems were Gibraltar and Israel, while topping the table were Italy, Egypt and the Syrian Arab Republic. Of the birds lost, 43 per cent were being taken in the EU despite the robust provisions of the EC Birds Directive, and for some species and families, the annual take equated with 10 per cent of the population.
33. Among the worst locations, the top 32 sites each had an annual toll of more than 100,000 birds, and the worst 20 sites accounted for 30 per cent of all birds taken. This, however, did mean that targeting just a few sites could have a dramatic impact on reducing losses.
34. The reasons why people killed and took birds illegally included for food, for sport and for caging, but a considerable proportion of the birds taken for food was not consumed by the hunters themselves but sold restaurants as delicacies. Taxidermy and pest control accounted for a small proportion of illegal taking.
35. The review clearly showed that basic data were lacking and this needed to be tackled urgently. Ms. Crockford referred delegates wanting more details to information documents in the UNEP/CMS/MIKT1/Inf.5 series.
36. BirdLife International was excited at the prospect of MIKT catalyzing action on the ground and Ms. Crockford suggested that the next regions to be the focus of attention should be the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Arabian Peninsula and the rest of Europe. She expressed the hope that, when the second edition of the review was published, there would be more positive trends to report, and concluded her remarks by thanking the BirdLife partners for their support, the anonymous donor who had funded the review and the European Commission for providing the resources enabling the Secretariat to appoint a coordinator.
37. Noor Noor (Nature Conservation Egypt) had some questions on the figures for Egypt but suggested that these could be addressed on the third day of the meeting which would concentrate on Egypt.
38. Edward van Asch (CITES Secretariat) inquired how many of the birds taken in the EU were used or traded nationally and how many were traded internationally. Ms. Crockford said that the review had not revealed the proportions.
39. Olivier Biber (Landbirds Working Group) asked whether there were estimates regarding the number of birds legally killed or taken in the region so that a picture could emerge of the overall harvest. Ms. Crockford agreed that such information would be useful but undertaking the work would depend on the funding being made available.
40. François Lamarque (France) said that he queried the figures attributed to France in the review and questioned the methodology used to compile the review. There was a need to define and differentiate between legal and illegal killing, taking and trade. While BirdLife International might not like the hunting methods used in France, they were in many cases

legal. He agreed that robust scientific data were needed but suggested that it might be preferable for the review to be undertaken by a different organization, one less partial than BirdLife International. He added that the European Commission was aiming to obtain more data on legal killing through the reporting procedures under the EC Birds Directive.

41. Ms. Crockford agreed that robust scientific data were needed and pointed out that the review contained caveats as it was based on the best available information and this might not be comprehensive. She would also welcome it if another organization took the lead, given that BirdLife International's resources were limited and there were other projects to undertake.
42. Andrea Rutigliano (CABS) said that there were data on legal hunting dating from 2005 available online, with an estimate of 100 million birds legally killed. This sort of project required a great deal of fieldwork. He also questioned the data relating to Lebanon where hunting was illegal but looking at Facebook postings from that country indicated that many birds were being killed there.
43. Lars Lachmann (NABU) said that his organization had commissioned a review of the 2005 CABS report and it was hoped that the desk study would be conducted this year and the results would be available in 2017.
44. Osama El-Gebaly (EEAA) asked how much time had been spent doing the fieldwork in Egypt for example.
45. David Scallan (FACE) said that the extent of the harvest through hunting should be established, and EU Member States, under the next round of Article 12 (Birds Directive) reporting, would be asked for estimates. FACE has been calling for and collating bag data for some time.
46. The Chair thanked Ms. Crockford and referred to the extensive documentation provided for the meeting. The BirdLife International report highlighted a number of problems and identified possible solutions. One important issue was the distinction between legal and illegal hunting. He noted and welcomed the candid caveats in the report that the information provided was the best available but further work was necessary. The report could, however, form the basis of the meeting's discussions. Consideration should be given to how best to conduct monitoring.
47. The Chair called on all delegates to be patient and to agree on the fundamental principles. He noted that hunters questioned the need to take measures for the conservation of quails as these were a short-lived species and if they were not hunted, they would die anyway. It was different for longer-lived species such as raptors. The reasons why people hunted had changed, with little hunting done for subsistence any more, and international smuggling emerging as a new aspect. The equipment used had also changed and the authorities were now unable to respond.

48. Ragh Ragh Ewada (Hunting Union of Egypt) sought clarification of the figures presented for Egypt and for the Syrian Arab Republic, which was in the midst of a civil war. Hunting was a long-established practice in Egypt and legal hunting was properly regulated and was suffering from the poaching. Legitimate hunters wanted to carry on within the regulations.
49. Gamal Gomaa (Nature Conservation Sector) asked about the figures of illegal killing of birds in Egypt and how it was produced
50. Ms. Crockford welcomed the participation of responsible hunters in the Task Force as key partners and asked Noor Noor to provide the background on how the figures for Egypt were reached.
51. Mr. Noor (NCE) said that a full explanation would be given on the third day of the meeting when the focus would turn to Egypt. He did however explain that NCE had worked closely with the Ministry and the EEAA. The figure of 5.6 million birds had been based on a relatively small study conducted in 2015-16. Further results would be presented next year.
52. Mohamed Habib (Red Sea Association) questioned the definition of illegal killing applied to Egypt as there were no quotas set, so all hunting was legal in that respect.
53. Wed Abdou (EEAA) said that he had conducted some of the survey work as a desk study in his own time rather than on behalf of the Agency. The interim results provided an indication of the number of birds taken and the species worst affected. In addition, this study should be used as a guiding tool for future intervention to tackle the issue.
54. The Chair said that it was clear that the meeting would not be able to agree on definitive figures and the report contained the best available estimates based on a variety of studies. From the North of Sinai, 54 species from 20 families were affected with possibly 3.3 million quails and 500,000 birds of other species taken, killed or trapped by means that could not be described as “traditional”.
55. Sherif Baha El-Din (NCE) said that the meeting would not be able to establish a definitive figure for the number of birds taken, but questioned whether a precise figure was relevant. What was clear was that the number was unsustainable for many species. A clearer picture would emerge over time but the figures would fluctuate.
56. The Chair said that species such as fish or birds often responded to being harvested. It was however evident that the numbers being taken were having alarming consequences on the status of the targeted species.
57. The slides making up Ms Crockford’s presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Update on Recommendation No 164 (2013) of the Bern Convention Standing Committee on the implementation of the Tunis Action Plan 2013-2020 for the eradication of illegal killing, trapping and trade of wild birds. Outcomes of the 3rd Meeting of Special Focal Points for Illegal Killing of Birds, 14-15 April 2016, Tirana (Albania)

58. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) described the implementation of the Tunis Action Plan three years after its adoption. The issue of the illegal killing of birds was receiving higher priority on the agendas of various international fora, such as CBD, CMS and the Bern and Barcelona Conventions.
59. The Tunis Action Plan contained ten straight-forward elements; these were:
- identification of national wildlife crime priorities
 - conservation impact
 - identification and standardization of gravity factors
 - elaboration of sentencing guidelines
 - take account of the biological and institutional aspects
 - national stakeholder dialogue
 - establish trust
 - awareness raising and education
 - publication of enforcement results, crime statistics
 - networking and capacity-building
60. The Action Plan sought to balance the social, economic and environmental dimensions.
61. The 3rd Meeting of the Special Focal Points Network had taken place in Albania, 14-15 April 2016 and had received reports from the European Commission, BirdLife International and FACE.
62. Case studies involved Hungary where the emphasis was on policing raptor poisoning, Italy where there were IKB “hotspots” such as the Strait of Messina, Albania, where there had been a total ban on hunting following political turmoil in the 1990s and a problem with foreign hunters, and Malta, where the role of NGOs in implementing the Tunis Action Plan had been significant. The Chair of the CMS Scientific Council, Fernando Spina, had spoken on the biological aspects of the flyways approach.
63. The 15 Party reports had shown that progress was being made across the board but was rather uneven.
64. Little was known about the impact of illegal killing on bird populations and the threat that it posed had to be assessed in the context of other factors.

65. The three priorities for the Tunis Action Plan were ensuring that it and other international laws were being properly transposed into national legislation and implemented on the ground; that national legislation was adequate, and that the authorities were enforcing the law and were suitably trained and equipped to carry out their duties.
66. The slides making up Mr Golovkin's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

EU Roadmap towards Eliminating Illegal Killing, Trapping and Trade of Birds and Update on the EU Action Plan on Wildlife Trafficking

67. Ms. Arvela (European Commission) gave a presentation in two parts, the first describing the road map and the second concerning the European Union's Action Plan on wildlife trafficking.
68. The EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 contained targets for nature conservation and these included the completion and appropriate management of the Natura 2000 network as well as improving public awareness. and enforcement. The 7th Environmental Action Plan ran until 2020 and its one of its goals is better implementation of the legislation.
69. Of the populations of 500 species of bird naturally present in the EU, 52 per cent had secure status, 17 per cent were threatened, 15 per cent were near threatened and 16 per cent had uncertain status.
70. The Birds and Habitats Directives are the basis for implementing CBD and CMS. The Bird Directive provides a general system of protection of birds. Some species are hutable under certain conditions and the Birds Directive prohibits e.g. prohibited certain means of taking. The Habitats Directive required the protection of certain habitat types and species and established the Natura 2000 network including sites for migratory birds...
71. The role of the European Commission in implementing the Directives included ensuring that Member States comply with them. Cases relating to illegal killing of birds had been opened. Cases against France (because of the Ortolan bunting - *Emberiza hortulana*), Italy (for general breaches) and Greece (regarding birds of prey) were currently open.
72. A study conducted in 2011 in 28 Member States had discovered that the main problems were poisoning, trapping and trade, hunting outside the allowed season and within protected areas. It concluded e.g. that it is difficult to estimate the impact of these activities, as the recorded illegal activities may be only a fraction of real activity.
73. The Larnaca Declaration had been issued after a conference held in 2011 in Cyprus by the Council of Europe. This Declaration highlighted zero tolerance for the illegal killing of birds.
74. The EU road map was drafted in 2012 following consultations with the Member States and other stakeholders. It had been updated regularly and it is part of the Tunis Action Plan. It

comprised four sections with actions allocated to the European Commission and the Member States and stakeholders. The Commission's responsibilities include raising awareness of authorities and civil society, funding (through the LIFE Regulation), coordination and enforcement.

75. Examples of actions taken include the biannual meetings of the ORNIS Committee, biannual meetings with stakeholders (e.g. FACE, INTERPOL, CMS and AEWA, the Council of Europe, IMPEL and BirdLife International). The LIFE funding programme was continuing and species action plans are under development for the European turtle dove (*Streptopelia turtur*) and the Cinereous vulture (*Aegypius monachus*) and Bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*). The Commission also funded the ENEC and IMPEL projects (e.g. work on illegal hunting tourism). It also supports the training of judges with a new module prepared this year. The EU is developing a EU strategy on raptors and is working on measures to restrict the use of lead shot in wetlands and over other terrestrial habitats and in fishing weights. The Task Force had also received funding for three years.
76. The European Commission shared the figures contained in the BirdLife report, and the table for the ten worst countries, showing Egypt at the top with 5.7 million birds illegally taken. Although some countries have shown doubts on the data, these figures have raised needed discussion on illegal killing of birds.
77. The EU Action Plan on wildlife trafficking established that the scale of illegal trade in wildlife meant that it ranked third, behind only arms and narcotics; wildlife crime however included more than just birds. The EU is a market, a source and a transit zone for illegal trade.
78. A recent court case in Belgium was an example of actions taken against large-scale smuggling of CITES-listed species of bird, mainly raptors, where falsified certificates and tags had been used. Criminals were attracted to engage in illegal wildlife trade because they felt that the authorities accorded it low priority.
79. The three pillars of the Action Plan were: prevention, enforcement and global partnership. The European Council of Ministers had welcomed the Action Plan in June and had adopted the conclusions that it contained.
80. The slides making up Ms Arvela's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Case Studies

1. The situation of IKB of raptors in the Mediterranean

81. Nick P. Williams (CMS Raptors MOU) opened his remarks by thanking the Egyptian Government for hosting the meeting and the European Commission for its financial support of the Task Force.

82. He gave an account of the history of the Raptors MOU which had been negotiated under the auspices of CMS and had entered into force in November 2008. The Coordinating Unit had been established in Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates. The MOU covered 132 Range States of which 56 were signatories and 93 species of raptor were listed in three levels of priority. There was also a list of critical sites for raptors.
83. The MOU itself was relatively short, comprising just six pages. Annexed to it, however, was an Action Plan containing more detailed provisions.
84. IKB was a problem in the region as demonstrated by the BirdLife International report and Ms. Crockford's earlier presentation. The report was based on limited data and no definitive conclusions could be drawn. However, the indication that 80,000 birds of prey were being illegally taken was alarming, given that birds of prey were at the top of the food chain and were slow breeders.
85. "Hotspots" had been identified in the eastern Mediterranean and trends for raptor species ascertained in the countries of the region. High numbers of birds of prey were being taken illegally in EU Member States despite the EC Birds Directive. Hawks and eagles were the worst affected groups, followed by falcons. Most individuals came from the 33 species categorized as being of "Least Concern" on the IUCN Red List, but some birds from Endangered and Critically Endangered species were also affected. The take of Eurasian buzzards (*Buteo buteo*) was estimated at 23,000 birds; 3,500 Lesser spotted eagles (*Clanga pomarina*) from a much lower population base were also being taken, as were relatively high proportions of Spanish imperial eagles (*Aquila adalberti*) and Egyptian vultures (*Neophron percnopterus*).
86. The main reasons for illegally killing or taking raptors were: predator control, sport, falconry, taxidermy and for food.
87. In terms of legal provisions, birds of prey were fully protected in most countries, but in five some hunting was allowed: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Tunisia and Turkey. The level of killing and taking was unknown and therefore the impact on the populations could not be determined.
88. Trade was a factor but for most species the prices that the birds commanded were low. Peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*) however could reach US\$33,500 (much higher than captive-bred specimens) and other species US\$6,500. Such prices were attractive to poachers and an incentive for them to continue the practice.
89. The slides making up Mr Williams' presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

II. The case of the implementation of the Tunis Action Plan in Malta

90. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) explained that Malta was situated in the central Mediterranean along the Eastern-most fringes of the central Mediterranean flyway for migratory birds and described the significant extent of illegal killing and taking of birds that was occurring on the island in the past. He mentioned that prior to the adoption of the Tunis Action Plan four years earlier, various NGOs often described the island as a war zone for birds, where poachers were not being effectively prosecuted.
91. The meeting in Tunis served as inspiration and turning point, as it was clear that Malta was not alone and common solutions could be found.
92. Hunting was a highly polarized issue in Malta and a referendum had been held on the question of hunting during the spring migration. Violent protests had broken out when hunting was suspended following the illegal killing of a White stork (*Ciconia ciconia*).
93. The key elements in changing behaviour were: reform of legislation, enforcement of the law, improvements to judicial processes and raising public awareness.
94. A major reform of hunting-related regulations took place in Malta. Hunters now had to use a new electronic recording system which allowed the authorities to monitor the harvest in real time. Penalties had been made more severe, with heavier fines, imprisonment and suspension of licences. More enforcement officers had been deployed to monitor spring and autumn migration seasons, with 90 deployed in 2015 compared with 61 in 2012 to cover around 180 square kilometres of Malta's countryside. These officers were also assisted by dozens of volunteers from NGOs, including bird conservation organisations and local hunting associations which nominated voluntary "hunting marshals". Involvement of hunting organisations was particularly useful in bringing about a culture change.
95. Joint patrols were being organized among agencies and modern technological devices such as UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) and GIS (geographic information systems) were being deployed.
96. Awareness-raising training was being organized for hunters, and a major reform of hunting education and hunting license test processes also took place. Hunters are rigorously tested on knowledge of legislation, as well as on bird identification, prior to obtaining license.
97. The authorities had pursued prosecutions for a number of crimes including poaching within protected areas, hunting protected species, hunting outside the permitted season and hunting without a licence. Higher fines had been imposed and real prison sentences were meted out in several cases involving illegal targeting of protected species. The message that there was zero tolerance of poaching had been understood, and BirdLife Malta corroborated by CABS reported a large drop in the number of wildlife crimes and fewer birds being taken to veterinary clinics with gunshot wounds.

98. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) indicated that a report by Egyptian researchers suggested that over 300 Maltese hunters were coming to Egypt and in particular to Lake Nasser and accounted for 60,000 birds in a single visit. Many of the birds were smuggled home but some were simply burned on site. He asked regarding measures taken by Malta to address this problem.
99. Mr. Golovkin explained that one of the main drivers behind IKB in Malta in the past was illegal taxidermy and trade in protected species. Due to legal reforms including major increase in penalties for illegal possession, importation, taxidermy and trade, incidence of such crime in Malta dropped dramatically. However, some poachers resorted to travelling to countries with lax regulatory regime in an attempt to smuggle illegally shot birds from such third countries into Malta. To address this issue, the authorities strengthened controls and penalties over smuggling, also extending legal protection to non-European species not covered by the EC Birds Directive. However, the fact that some poachers still do find their way to countries with weak enforcement indicates the need for more regional cooperation between enforcement entities, as well as the need for strengthening enforcement and rule of law across the region.
100. The slides making up Mr Golovkin's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

III. Trapping of Goldfinch in Algeria by Mohammed Hadjeloum (Algeria)

101. Mr. Hadjeloum (Algeria) explained that for security reasons all hunting had been banned in Algeria.
102. There was a long tradition of hunting goldfinches, which were coveted because of their song. The species was also bred in captivity to be kept as pets. In recent times the price for goldfinches had risen steeply, which had led to more birds being taken from the wild, often in nets set up long rivers. Mortality rates among captured birds were high, with as many as half dying during transportation.
103. Anti-poaching measures implemented included check points on roads and over the period from 2010 to the present, over 20,000 birds had been seized and released. The year 2015 saw 9,865 birds seized and 644 so far in 2016. The figures represent just the tip of the iceberg as most captured birds are not detected by the authorities.
104. To help raise public awareness, films of the release of recovered birds were shown with a particular emphasis on educating children about conservation issues.
105. The slides making up Mr Hadjeloum's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

IV. Tour du Valat Biological Research Station

106. Laura Dami gave a presentation which emphasized the possible contribution of the International Waterbird Census (IWC) to the fight against IKB.
107. Over 30 million waterbirds were counted in January each year by 15,000 volunteers in 25,000 wetlands, helping provide data of interest to a number of international conventions and opportunities for face-to-face meetings with hunters and rangers, helping to raise awareness of conservation issues and identify knowledge gaps and training needs.
108. The slides making up Ms. Dami's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Updates from other UN Agencies and International Organizations and Networks

I. Lobna Ben Nakhla - Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA)

109. Ms. Ben Nakhla gave an overview of the history of the protocol concerning Specially Protected Areas and Biological Diversity in the Mediterranean, which covered 21 countries and the EU and nine Action Plans under the Barcelona Convention. Fifteen species of bird were listed on Annex II of the Protocol and a further ten were to be added bringing the total to 25. Assistance had been given to Egypt, Libya, Montenegro and Tunisia.
110. The RAC/SPA was actively seeking cooperation with other forums, such as the CMS Task Force.
111. The slides making up Ms Ben Nakhla's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

II. Cindy Chimal, INTERPOL

112. The presentation by INTERPOL which was to have been delivered remotely could not be given because of technical difficulties with the communications connection.

III. Edward van Asch, CITES

113. Provided a presentation on CITES and the coordinated action to combat wildlife crime through the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC).
114. Introduced CITES and noted the Convention had near universal membership with 182 Parties and that CITES is the preeminent global legal instrument for regulating international trade in over 35,000 species of wild animals and plants, which are listed in three Appendices

according to the degree of protection they need. Appendix I included species threatened with extinction and for which international commercial trade in wild-taken specimens is generally prohibited. Appendix II included species not necessarily threatened with extinction, but for which trade must be controlled to avoid their becoming extinct and for which international commercial trade is allowed but regulated. Appendix III included species for which a country is asking other Parties to help with its protection. Appendix I accounted for just 3 per cent of all trade in species listed under the Convention and about 150 animal species and 1,800 plant species out of the 35,000 species listed account for 90% the trade. Trade in CITES listed species is regulated through a system of permits and certificates.

115. Wildlife crime was not confined to elephants and other high profile species but to a number of other less well known species. Illegal trade varied from highly organized networks to opportunistic illegal traders. Penalties for wildlife crime were often low and it the importance of combating corruption was also noted.
116. The ICCWC had been developed to provide coordinated support to the national wildlife law enforcement agencies and to the sub-regional and regional networks that are mandated to combat wildlife crime and to build capacity. ICCWC's global network, Strategic Programme 2016-2020 as well as a number of key activities and tools and services available through ICCWC were noted, such as among other the ICCWC Wildlife and Forest Crime Analytic Toolkit, the ICCWC Indicator Framework for Combating Wildlife Crime, the CITES Virtual college, secure communication and intelligence channels provided by INTERPOL and WCO and ENVIRONET. It was also noted a directory of enforcement focal points was available on the CITES website.
117. The Chair pointed out that a series of regional meetings was being held under CITES in the run-up to the CITES COP in September 2016. The issues at the heart of the MIKT Task Force were relevant to many different fora including CITES and CMS.
118. The slides making up Mr. van Asch's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the MIKT page on the CMS website. Additional information on CITES or ICCWC can be found on the [CITES](#) website and [ICCWC](#) portal.

IV. Angus Innes – European Network of Prosecutors for the Environment (ENPE)

119. After thanking the Egyptian Government for hosting this significant meeting, Mr. Innes explained that the ENPE had been established in 2012 and had become fully operational and funded in 2015 (its five year Workplan is financed through the EU-LIFE Programme). Its aim is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of prosecutors and judges in combating environmental crime across the EU. Its mission includes the delivery of specialist training, the provision of guidance on best practice and improving the improvement of data collection. He said that ENPE had four working groups tasked for the next five years, each devoted to a specific subject matter. One of those was Wildlife Crime, chaired by Lars Magnusson, a Swedish Prosecutor. He said that he represented both ENPE and the ENPE Wildlife Working Group.

120. He said that wildlife crime was in the spotlight at the moment. It had been put on the international agenda both by the EU (“EU Action Plan against Wildlife Trafficking” 2016) and by the UN (UNDOC – “World Wildlife Crime Report” 2016). He referred to the first-ever meeting of all four European networks involved in environmental law enforcement which was held in Utrecht, Netherlands, in May, the 2016. (The networks are ENPE, IMPEL – network of inspectors, EUFJE – network of judges and EnviCrimeNet -the network of Police). In Utrecht, the issue of wildlife crime was on the agenda and case studies were presented.
121. The case studies involved IKB. One was a Romanian case involving the shooting of hundreds of larks and pipits in Romania by Italian hunters for the gratification of their hunting instinct and to supply restaurants in Italy. The offenders included Romanian citizens and corrupted local officials and Italian citizens. Another case, prosecuted in Belgium, involved smuggled birds of prey eggs and chicks from the wild in France and Spain to Belgium using falsified CITES certificates – which stated that they came from captive-bred stock. Some species of birds of prey involved were valued at 10,000 Euros in the market. All were cases in which offences against the general criminal law, or financial and taxation laws, were charged as well as wildlife offences. This often greatly increases the penalties and confiscation powers available to the courts. In the Belgian case offenders were sentenced to periods of 1-4 years imprisonment, fines imposed were up to 90,000 Euros and confiscation of 835,000 Euros was ordered.
122. He stressed that the prosecutors were just one link in the chain and were greatly reliant on investigators and the quality of evidence gathered by them.
123. He explained that the fate of the money levied in fines or that was ordered to be paid by way of confiscation - depended on the law of the country where the case was heard. In the UK, part of a monetary confiscation order was kept by the investigating agency, by way of incentivisation by central government but the balance of the confiscation ordered and all fines went to the central Government Treasury.
124. In many countries wildlife crime cases were very newsworthy, often having good visuals for television and this helped raise public awareness – as did heavy penalties.
125. The slides making up Mr. Innes’ presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

A perspective from the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the European Union

126. David Scallan (FACE) explained that his organization represented 7 million hunters in EU and some other European States. He outlined examples of FACE Member activities in the fight against IKB and stressed that hunters are part of the solution and FACE supported the “zero tolerance” approach, regardless of whether the number of birds illegally taken was 11 million or 36 million, as there were impacts on conservation and on the interests of legal hunters. He said that FACE was pleased to be part of the Task Force, while complementing

the presence of hunting associations from Egypt and noting that the Albanian hunters' association was not part of the recent meeting in Albania under the Bern Convention.

127. FACE had been established in 1977, and cooperated with both BirdLife International and various MEAs and sustainable hunting make a positive contribution to conservation. He emphasized the importance of communication and advocated the value of issuing press releases, condemning illegal activities.
128. The slides making up Mr Scallan's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

The Task Force's draft Programme of Work

129. Mr. Heredia (UNEP/CMS Secretariat) opened the discussion on the draft Programme of Work (POW) for the Task Force. He presented document UNEP/CMS/MIKT1/Doc.4, which was a partially completed table based largely on the Tunis Action Plan and other supporting background documents. The Secretariat had filled in some of the text, but it was stressed that this was an early draft and material could be added or deleted as Task Force members saw fit.
130. The matrix was projected on screen and the three sections (legal and institutional; conservation and monitoring; and education and public awareness) and eight columns of the table which included a timeline and level of priority, were described. The meeting was asked whether it was content with the basic design of the table, or whether it needed to be simplified or amended to include more information.
131. Mr. Heredia suggested that the plenary hold a general discussion before the Task Force broke up into smaller sub-regional groups to consider the details. The column relating to the budget had been left blank deliberately.
132. Mr. Biber (Landbirds WG) said that the draft POW seemed to be fine, and thanked the Secretariat for the preliminary work in preparing it. He questioned the need for identifying priorities which would be time-consuming. Everything included in the POW would have to be done, so he suggested deleting any item that would not have to be addressed over the coming four years.
133. Ms. Crockford (Birdlife International) suggested making the POW as specific as possible, building on the Tunis Action Plan and setting out clearly how this would be operationalized. She also suggested changing the column on desired outcomes to include specific targets and making it clear in the column on responsible bodies, which organization was in the lead. She also sought clarification of the actions to be included, pointing out that introducing or amending legislation was clearly the task of national governments, and the role of the Task Force would be confined to providing guidance on the elements for inclusion. All countries should also be encouraged to develop their own national action plan to combat IKB, with the Task Force standing ready to advise when required.

134. Mr. Innes (ENPE) said that having legislation in place was only part of the solution; there also had to be adequate penalties to punish and deter. Often laws had been passed years ago and the tariff of fines had not been reviewed and had become derisory. In some countries, sentencing guidelines existed for some environmental offences, such as pollution, but not for wildlife crime. This deficiency should be rectified. National set-ups also differed, with the prosecutors in some countries being part of the general criminal prosecution service, without specific environmental or wildlife crime training. The most important aspect was that prosecutors of environmental crimes should specialists have specialist training and knowledge in addition to their general criminal prosecutory qualifications and experience.
135. Mr. van Asch (CITES Secretariat) suggested that the sections and actions should be numbered to ease identification. He also suggested that actions should be addressed to specific countries and bodies that could provide advice. Regarding the budget, he suggested that the POW should focus mainly on activities that could be undertaken within existing resources and include a number of additional activities that could be implemented subject to availability of funds, so that most actions could be implemented if additional resources were not forthcoming.
136. Mr. Mundkur (Flyways WG) complemented the Task Force and the work going into preparing the IKB POW. This TF and POW fits within the global priorities identified in the CMS POW on Migratory Birds and Flyways 2014-2025 adopted by CMS Parties in 2014. He said that the IKB POW contained many great actions, some of which might be better sub-contracted to participating organizations or may already be in their planned activities, leaving just the core activities to be tackled by the Task Force as a whole.
137. Mr. Noor (NCE) said that some of the actions were included in other Action Plans, so were already being tackled in other fora; such activities should be annotated accordingly.
138. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) said that as the Task Force already recognized the Tunis Action Plan, the MIKT POW could be pared down to the essentials and contain just those activities that the Task Force would be able to undertake over the coming four years.
139. Ms. Crockford (BirdLife International) said regarding targets that the break-out groups should consider monitoring and devise a score card or barometer process.
140. Mr. Lamarque (France) supported NABU's suggestion that given that time, money and personnel were limited, the Task Force should concentrate on a few realistic objectives and achieve them rather than attempt to do too much and find in four years' time that most of it had not been completed.
141. Ms. Arvela (European Commission) also agreed with NABU and suggested that close comparison be made between the POW and the Tunis Action Plan.

142. The Chair emphasized the importance of achieving progress, and the POW should contribute to the Task Force's clarity of purpose. He cited the example of Malta which had made great efforts to implement the Tunis Action Plan and had achieved considerable success in a short time. The POW and the Task Force had the benefit of being under the aegis of the Convention and UNEP, which added to its political weight, and the Convention's ambassadors could be asked to help promote the fight against IKB and ensure that parties took their responsibilities seriously. The POW also had the support of NGOs, which often had a freer hand to act than governments.
143. Egypt had an environmental court and a specialist judiciary but the judges needed training and were reliant on experts for advice. If they sought counsel from the wrong experts, then the decisions reached would not be right.
144. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) in response to comments by other participants said that there was a significant overlap between the POW and the Tunis Action Plan, and it was important therefore to avoid duplication. Under the latter some good progress had already been made. The Tunis Action Plan had a more limited geographic scope and the Task Force should seek to help mobilize political support in countries struggling with implementation. He supported the idea of a score-board which would help show progress and provide an incentive for countries to carry out activities to avoid being at the foot of the table.
145. Mr. Schall (Germany) supported the Vice-Chair's comments, recalling the discussion at COP11 in Quito about how the Task Force under CMS would fit alongside the processes under the Bern Convention. It is vital that CMS and the Bern Convention coordinate their activities.
146. Mr. Williams (Raptors MOU) said that consensus seemed to have been reached that the Tunis Action Plan should be the basis of the POW with some additions arising from the questionnaire. He suggested adding some colour-coding to identify those elements of the POW drawn directly from the Tunis Action Plan, so that the Task Force could concentrate on the additional elements.
147. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) agreed but proposed the addition of a column in which to indicate cross references to the Tunis Action Plan.
148. Mr. Heredia (UNEP/CMS) said that the Secretariat had asked the members of the Task Force to provide their top three priorities to address IKB in the Mediterranean. He thanked those that had responded and said that those priorities had been included in the POW. He also pointed out that CMS was a global treaty while the Bern Convention dealt with just one region. Also CMS and the Bern Convention did not have completely overlapping membership, and a degree of duplication between the POW and the Action Plan was not necessarily a disadvantage, given the two instruments' differing geographic scope.
149. The Chair said that some countries, such as Malta and Egypt, had made progress under the Tunis Action Plan. In Egypt, despite political instability, the Minister had been determined

to tackle the problems and had shown a keen interest in the issues and implementation of the Tunis Action Plan had started.

150. Ms. Crockford felt that one of the added values of the Task Force and its POW was the extension to cover the entire Mediterranean region beyond the membership of the Bern Convention. She echoed the comments of the representative of CITES on the importance of finding sources of funding.
151. Mr. Heredia said that the Secretariat would update the template as agreed in the plenary, changing the expected results into targets and adding cross references to other fora where overlaps were identified. A new template would be available for the break-out groups.
152. At the start of the second day, Mr. Heredia described the revised template briefly before the meeting split into three regional break-out groups. The principal changes made were that column three would now include details of country-led initiatives requiring synergies. The column on expected results had been replaced with one on targets and each item was identified as being either one from the Tunis Action Plan or an additional activity.

Legal aspects, implications and gaps, improvement of law enforcement and training needs for the judiciary

153. The three regional break-out groups were established, with Mr. Innes facilitating the European Group with Mr. Lachmann as rapporteur, the Chair facilitating the African Group with Ms. Ben Nakhla as rapporteur and Mr. van Asch facilitating the Middle East Group with Mr. Mundkur serving as rapporteur.

Discussion of Conclusions in Plenary

154. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) reported on the discussion of the European Group, the members of which had considered actions that they felt might be applicable beyond their immediate region. A number of the issues considered might also fit better under cross-cutting themes rather than being categorized as legal, conservation or capacity-building.
155. It was recognized that the abbreviation IKB had gained currency, but it was still felt that IKTTB was more accurate as it reflected also the aspects of taking and trade.
156. National action plans were considered to be a good idea, but it was noted that in Gibraltar, Israel and to a lesser degree Egypt, these might not be necessary as either measures were already being taken or the level of threat was not high enough.
157. It was agreed that a scoreboard to show progress would be desirable and that this would require a certain amount of reporting, but burdens of parties should be kept to a minimum and any reporting requirements harmonized with other parallel fora such as the Bern Convention's Tunis Action Plan.

158. Mr. Heredia expressed the view that IKB was well established and was broadly understood to extend beyond just killing and covered taking and trade.
159. Mr. Williams (Raptors MOU) found IKB more elegant and easier on the tongue than the alternative suggested but did raise concerns about the abbreviation MIKT, which he thought would be baffling for the uninitiated and would have preferred a more self-explanatory name and acronym such as the Illegal Killing of Birds Task Force for the Mediterranean region.
160. The Chair called for simplicity, asking whether the name of the Task Force would have to be changed if its mandate were extended to poisoning. He saw advantages in having a shorter abbreviation which lent itself to translation into the other languages. He thought that the consensus was that the abbreviation IKB should be retained.
161. Mr. Habib (Red Sea Association) said that “killing” was a harsh and violent term, and the wider issue facing the Task Force was illegal hunting.
162. Mr. Noor (NCE) said that there had been a long debate. In English the term “hunting” caused problems as this was intrinsically a legal activity and the problem was the criminal activity of “poaching”. For linguistic and cultural reasons, “hunting” was the more appropriate term in Arabic.
163. Mr. Scallan (FACE) said that a similar discussion had been held under the Bern Convention, where it had been expressly stated that the measures were not to be directed against hunting, which was a legal activity. He however accepted the point about the appropriate rendition of the terms in Arabic.
164. The Chair said that the definitions seemed to have been more clearly settled in Europe than in North Africa where the arguments were still going on.
165. Mr. Lachmann explained that some very specific activities such as particular workshops had been removed from the POW and had been replaced by more general entries. Separate legal assessments about how each country could meet its international obligations were proposed including how well suited the legislation was to deliver the desired results. It was agreed that the target should refer to adaptation of the legal framework, noting that Governments were free to enact stricter regulations than required under any international treaties they had signed.
166. Mr. Mundkur (Flyways WG) said that guidelines should be disseminated providing advice on how to strengthen legal frameworks. The Task Force could circulate a questionnaire to glean the core information on what legislation already existed, identifying the main components of national laws.

167. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) pointed out that as national legal systems differed, it would be difficult for the Task Force to draft universal guidelines; it would be better to leave this to national legal experts more acquainted with the local practices.
168. Ms. Crockford suggested that the guidelines could be more like a check-list of areas to be covered rather than a comprehensive guide on how to draft legislation.
169. Mr. Innes sought clarification of the term “regional law”, which he assumed was meant to refer to legislation under a regional legislative agreement such as the EU.
170. The Chair said that the EU was the only such organization of its kind in the region, there being nothing similar in the Middle East. The only other regional instrument of note was the Barcelona Convention.
171. Mr. Noor recalled that the BirdLife International questionnaire had included a section on legislation and suggested that countries should conduct their review of legislation using the guidance prepared by the Task Force and the Secretariat.
172. Mr. Lachmann therefore proposed that the POW should contain a reference to the Secretariat drafting guidelines on legislation. He also suggested splitting the column to differentiate between the POW and the Tunis Action Plan and assigning responsibility for taking action.
173. Mr. Biber (Landbirds WG) said that as it was the POW of the Task Force, responsibility should rest with the Task Force and its members, while the Chair said that in most cases the onus would rest with the governments.
174. Ms. Arvela (European Commission) noted that one action assigned to the European Commission was to provide guidance on compliance with EU environmental obligations; this would also cover wildlife trade.
175. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) asked what was meant by compliance in this case. The only way of assessing how effective legislation was in implementing international obligations would be to examine each country’s laws in turn and assess how treaty provisions were transposed and then assess the effectiveness of enforcement and implementation. Such a task would be better left to the national authorities themselves as they had a greater awareness of local practices, culture and customs. Better to devolve this issue to countries as they are more aware of the customs, systems and culture. He doubted whether a centralized questionnaire would be useful given the large number of local variables.
176. Mr. Habib (Red Sea Association) noted that the timelines for legislation were different for the three sub-regions. He questioned whether it made sense to delay given the threats that the birds were facing across the Mediterranean.

177. Mr. Williams (Raptors MOU) commented that setting up the three sub-regional groups seemed to have added a tier of complexity when it came to drawing the conclusions together. He suggested adopting a different approach for the next series of break-out groups. The plenary session discussing the findings of the break-out groups would provide the opportunity to take account of regional differences.
178. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) said that the Bern Convention had adopted the guidelines on gravity factors and sentencing principles which were available online. These guidelines can be useful during review of national legislation. He circulated a copy of these guidelines via email.
179. Mr. Innes observed that, with regard to penalties the UK had adopted a system where the level of fines reflected the criminal's ability to pay as well as the seriousness of the offence. So far as the use of intelligence networks were concerned, he said consideration had to be given to the need to keep investigations, and the intelligence that they were based on, confidential and secure, both to avoid forewarning criminals of what the authorities were doing and to avoid the claim by accused persons that they were unable to get a fair trial because of adverse publicity.
180. Mr. Lachmann said that some changes were proposed to the wording as the characteristics of IKB across the region varied and the POW had to cover the taking of goldfinches in Algeria and killing soaring birds in Lebanon. In some cases, the actions seemed to be too specific, so these had been replaced with more general provisions. It was considered important that existing international processes were used to the maximum (such as INTERPOL and the Barcelona Convention) and parties were encouraged to act bilaterally (e.g. Malta and Egypt in dealing with Maltese poachers in Egypt). Training should be offered to specialist law enforcement agencies, prosecutors and judges.
181. Mr. Ewada (Hunting Union) said that experience showed that enforcing environmental law in Egypt was difficult. It was necessary to consult stakeholders when establishing mechanisms for implementation.
182. Mr. Rutigliano (CABS) said that different countries had different problems requiring different solutions. It would be useful to learn from the experiences of others in respect of sentencing policies and the conduct of investigations. Effective techniques could be taught on the best way to conduct raids on illegal markets (how to block the accesses and how to dress to avoid drawing attention to oneself) and workshops could be convened to help spread best practice. He agreed that specialist units were a good idea.
183. The Chair concluded that there was general agreement on the shape of this part of the POW and instructed the Secretariat to revise the draft taking into account the comments made.

Conservation and monitoring issues. Communication, education and awareness-raising issues.

184. Two thematic groups with open membership were established and these met for 1½ hours discussing (a) conservation and monitoring and (b) education and awareness-raising with respectively Mr. van Asch and Mr. Noor serving as facilitators and Mr. Williams and Mr. Golovkin serving as rapporteurs.

Discussions of conclusions in Plenary

185. Mr. Williams (Raptors MOU) presented the ideas discussed in the conservation and monitoring break-out group. The changes that the group proposed to the original text provided by the Secretariat were shown in “tracked changes” which were projected on screen.
186. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) said that the education and awareness-raising break-out group adopted an approach whereby it first sought to identify its target audiences, before formulating the appropriate communication objectives and identifying the right media for conveying the messages. The actions retained in the POW were those where the Task Force had a role to play; those activities which were the responsibility of the Parties and would need to be implemented at the national level were excluded. Parties should be encouraged to develop their own communication strategies to guide awareness raising effort at national level.
187. The target audience described as “local communities” could be sub-divided into a number of categories including teachers, chieftains, and religious and political leaders, as well as persons of different age groups.
188. Consideration was given as to how best to address poachers. Pressure could be exerted on them through law-abiding hunters and local communities. The general public could help add to political pressure if provided with information. The Task Force might need to commission a professional public relations company for advice.
189. Coordination of work done in collaboration with other MEAS with an interest in IKB should be undertaken by the Task Force, which should also be responsible for promoting its role.
190. With regard to training and seminars, it was not thought that a single one-off event would have sufficient impact. A broader approach involving national authorities engaging with hunters and trying to educate poachers to persuade them to respect the law suggestion would be preferable. Codes of conduct could be elaborated in conjunction with national hunters’ associations. Communication with the public using the media could be effected by commissioning a documentary as part of a toolkit of multi-media products.....

191. Consideration had been given regarding where to include the proposed scorecard, and the communication and education section seemed suitable. Pressure could be exerted on politicians if they saw that their country was lagging behind in the league table.
192. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) stressed that creating the scorecard was urgent and it should be ready for the CMS COP. He suggested that the Secretariat should draft it for approval by the Task Force.
193. Ms. Crockford (BirdLife International) asked what outputs the Task Force intended to present to the COP and whether there would be another Resolution tabled. She also pointed out that the UK operated a hotline through which incidents of bird poisoning could be reported. The Secretariat said that preparations for COP12 would be dealt with under agenda item 28.
194. Mr. van Asch (CITES Secretariat) noted ICCWC had developed a PSA on wildlife crime and suggested it might be a good idea to do a similar one with a focus on IKB.
195. Ms. Arvela (European Commission) said that many EC LIFE projects had dealt with bird-related crime and several had a public relations element. The next tranche of LIFE funding was open and bids had to be submitted by September 2016. In some circumstances, projects being undertaken outside the European Union were eligible.
196. The Chair also reminded the meeting that countries had NBSAPs under the Convention on Biological Diversity and these also contained public awareness-raising components. NBSAPS also tended to attract higher level political attention. Greater use should also be made of social media which were powerful tools for shaping and changing opinion. The Egyptian authorities had acted promptly in response to the recent sighting of a whale off the coast, allaying people's fears that the animal might be dangerous and creating positive interest.

Measures to promote education, communication and public awareness

197. Mr. Rutigliano (CABS) gave a presentation illustrating how bird protection camps worked and the success of campaigns to dismantle traps. The tactics used changed with deliberate attempts to try to catch poachers in the act. More recently, the number of traps discovered has fallen significantly and the number of cases taken to court attributable to the efforts of the volunteers up from 9 per cent to 56 per cent.
198. Campaigns had been conducted in Cyprus, with great success. Also in Spain targeting paranys (elaborate constructions with decoy birds and lime sticks) and through use of undercover filming showing the inadequacies of the local authorities' response but had led to the prohibition of lime sticks. And in Malta, where the high profile presence of the NGOs had led to the creation of safe zones for birds.

Socioeconomic study – Hunting and Illegal Killing of Birds along the Mediterranean Coast of Egypt follow-up work

199. Mr. Noor (NCE) gave a series of presentations outlining the work of Nature Conservation Egypt. His first report, given on behalf of his colleague Salwa Elhalawani, on follow-up actions relating to Hunting and Illegal Killing of Birds along the Mediterranean Coast of Egypt was a work in progress and the draft would need some refining.
200. The Ancient Egyptians were interested in ornithology and recorded birds in their inscriptions. They also hunted.
201. Over the last 10 years, the amount of hunting both legal and illegal had increased, and the levels attracted international media attention in 2012. Insufficient conservation-related research was being conducted to be able to assess properly what the impact of the greater take was.
202. A meeting had been convened in Bonn with the involvement of CMS, AEWA, the Egyptian and Libyan authorities and some NGOs. A Plan had emerged with four aims: awareness-raising, capacity-building, research and conservation action.
203. Funding had been raised through an appeal launched by NABU and a grant from the German Federal Environment Ministry BMUB had enabled AEWA to commission the socio-economic study. The Nando Peretti Foundation had also provided funds.
204. The socio-economic drivers had been examined and there appeared to be deep-rooted resistance to changes in traditional practices, such as placement of nets and trapping techniques, leading to the question of whether local hunters would accept new conservation strategies.
205. For the study, the Egyptian coast had been divided into three zones (from the Libyan border to Alexandria; from Alexandria to Suez; and the North Sinai coast) and interviews conducted with 73 hunters and traders from 25 communities. The interviewees' social background and social standing were recorded.
206. The trapping techniques most commonly used were: trammel, haleeg and eb nets, lime sticks and munsabs (which resembled small huts), guns and calling devices. For birds of prey sharak (noose) and fakh (trap) were also used.
207. Different hunting seasons applied to different species and regions. Hunters were categorized by social group, occupation, education level, family size (67 per cent came from households of 4-6 people in house, 18 per cent from larger households). The percentage of overall income generated from hunting was recorded. Most hunters (96 per cent) were male.

208. With regard to attitudes, most hunters could not envisage ever giving up hunting, many had severe doubts about adapting their practices while still recognizing the validity of the concept of sustainability being entrenched in law. There was a widely held belief that “God would provide” which was coupled with respect for species mention in the Holy Qur’an (although hoopoes were hunted).
209. Hunters could be divided into three categories: commercial hunters, recreational hunters and subsistence hunters, with each keeping, consuming or selling a different proportion of their take. The autumn migration was seen as chance to make money, but there was recognition that the spring migration was the prelude to the breeding season. Affluent hunters were more resilient to change, but the poorer ones were more vulnerable.
210. It was important to recognize how deep the cultural traditions were engaged in society. Outsiders appearing and “laying down the law” would be counterproductive, and local communities needed to be involved in any decisions made. Strengthening of enforcement of laws should be accompanied by awareness-raising campaigns. Political support should also be lobbied, bearing in mind that politicians needed to set priorities and other issues were competing for their attention.
211. The Chair reiterated that the Minister had reacted positively when he learned of the extent of the IKB problem and had approved the idea of the Ministry and the Agency working with NGOs after the publication of the National Geographic report. Trade was a major factor, with many birds consumed locally, but increasing numbers smuggled abroad. Quails, one of the most commonly targeted species commanded low prices but some raptors sold for thousands of dollars.
212. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) was fascinated by how the reports from Egypt were so relevant to Malta and even some of the vocabulary was similar. Social factors such as the level of education level of hunters were important. Hunters were determined to carry on practicing their centuries-old tradition, but some were more amenable to accepting some changes and regulation of their activities. Mr. Golovkin shared concerns about outsiders meddling in and trying to impose solutions.
213. Mr. Schall (Germany) congratulated Mr. Noor and the NCE on the study and mentioned that one key player was not present at the meeting, namely Sergey Dereliev, the Technical officer of the AEWAS Secretariat, but the BMUB was in agreement that CMS should lead on the Task Force.
214. Mr. Noor said that limited survey work was done in Northern Sinai because permits were needed to work there and sometimes these were not issued by the authorities because of security concerns. The Chair added that good data existed for the Northern Sinai. The communities in the area differed greatly and further assessment was needed to decide what alternative livelihoods would be viable, especially in “hotspots” for migratory birds. Fish farming might work in some localities.

215. Mr. Habib (Red Sea Association) pointed out that hunters with permits were operating within the law. The distinction had to be made between law abiding hunters and poachers. He noted also that the review also referred to unregulated hunting and sought an explanation of this concept.
216. Mr. Noor commented that the shooting of birds seemed to have been reduced, partly because of security and partly because of bureaucracy. He said that unregulated hunting was a term used to describe the lack of monitoring or enforcement: it was not meant as a criticism but merely an accurate portrayal of the situation on the ground.
217. The Chair stressed that clear definitions of terms such as “legal”, “illegal”, “unregulated”, “commercial”, “subsistence” etc. were needed and the provisional nature of the results meaning that figures should be treated with caution.
218. Mr. Scallan (FACE) agreed with the need for clear definitions and asked whether the use of trammel nets by local communities was perceived to be legal or illegal by those involved.
219. Mr. Noor explained that certain trammel nets were legal if licensed (one designed was prohibited). The rules of the EEAA required nets to be discriminate and non-target species should be released (the target species was the quail). Calling devices were illegal.
220. Mr. Lamarque (France) welcomed the report and the important social element. France would undertake a project under GEF named Ressource in the areas of the Nile and the Sahel, with a socio-economic component. The project could learn from the experiences in conducting surveys. FAO was one of the implementing partners.
221. Mr. Noor said that the greatest drawback was the lack of reliable data and the lack of funding to carry out the research. He reiterated that the results of the study were preliminary and in need of elaboration.
222. The slides making up Mr Noor’s presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Review of Egypt’s national legislation and enforcement mechanisms related to birds hunting and trapping

223. In this presentation, Mr. Noor gave an overview of Egypt’s current legislation and an assessment of the gaps and weaknesses and set out recommendations on how to make improvements.
224. The Egyptian constitution followed a presidential model, where the President appointed the executive, which proposed laws and sent bills to the legislature to consider. After due process, bills were passed and the new law promulgated. Egypt had a range of environmental and agricultural; laws but no act specifically dealt with hunting. Detailed

provisions were often contained in Executive Regulations (secondary legislation). Article 93 of the Constitution bound Egypt to its international commitments and the country was a signatory to many MEAs including CMS.

225. In addition to the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency, there was also the Egyptian Wildlife Service which was an agency under the Ministry of Agriculture. Offices of the local Governorates issued permits for nets under EAAA regulations and local government departments were responsible for enforcement. Coastal areas fell under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard, and nets along the shoreline needed three permits – one from the Environment Agency, one from the Coastguard for security purposes and one from the town hall.
226. Trammel nets were not illegal and quails could be hunted and were considered a national delicacy.
227. Law 4 of 1994 is the main environmental law but no link to integrating wildlife to urban and economic planning, and had no provisions for coordinating the fight against illegal killing. There was no database for applications for hunting permits. Despite some missing elements, the law was considered effective, with the main problem being the environment being a low political priority.
228. Mr. Noor added that as people had little confidence in the law and authorities on the question of protecting human interests, there was little understanding for calls on the government to protect wildlife.
229. Mr. Habib (Red Sea Association) said that any of the recommendations from the report were already being implemented and were covered by the Executive Decree.
230. Mr. El Kaissy (Hunting Club) spoke in Arabic and his intervention was translated into English for the benefit of other participants. On the question of hunting and poaching, the appropriate authorities were notified and aware of all legal practices. There was a clear hunting season and this was adhered to by hunters. Many coastal local authority areas had no hunting because of urban settlements and holiday resorts. Non-target species and protected species were usually released, but each year approximately 100 birds of prey were taken illegally. Enforcement authorities were present at ports and airports to prevent illegally taken birds from being exported. Since 2006, the Ministry of the Interior had been responsible for licensing guns. The use of bird calling devices, most of which came from Europe, was illegal.
231. Ms. Arvela (European Commission) explained that EU laws such as the Birds Directive allowed some hunting, and accordingly guidelines had been produced to explain what was and what was not permitted. The European Court of Justice had issued some rulings on the implementation of the Directive in some countries. Derogations from the provisions of the Directive were allowed and there were some conflicts between the provisions of the Directive and certain traditional practices; gluing and liming had been prohibited, which

caused problems in some countries. She gave an example that still some 20 years ago wild birds like finches were sold in Brussels' Grand Place market but it is no longer the case.

232. Mr. Golovkin (Vice-Chair, Malta) said that the European Commission's guidance for the Birds Directive was very useful and could be helpful to non-EU countries. The Birds Directive banned non-discriminate means but allowed exceptions. Sustainability was a major consideration, but data were required on bird populations to ensure that any take represented a low enough percentage of the total.
233. Mr. Lamarque (France) said that his country had introduced a streamlined licensing procedure to encourage legitimate hunters to collaborate. The codified nature of the French system established under since Napoleon made minor changes to regulations, avoiding the need for complete new laws.
234. Mr. El Sayed (Egypt) said that 300 cases of avian 'flu leading to 100 human deaths and the security situation in Sinai had affected hunting. Trammel nets were deployed for two months in autumn (not in spring) and the shooting season lasted months. Regarding licences for trammel nets, the number had reduced and the number issued was known to the authorities. Permits were specific to particular areas.
235. Mr. Mundkur (Flyways WG) drew the meeting's attention to the revised AEWA guidelines on sustainable harvest of migratory waterbirds produced by the Wetlands International Waterbird Harvest Specialist Group. Despite covering only certain categories taxa of bird, its findings would be of interest and he offered to share it with participants. It would be posted on the AEWA website shortly.
236. Mr. Gomaa (Director of Nature Conservation Sector) had a strong criticism against the socioeconomic study done by NCE where the data were based on guessing rather than being scientific study following the standard procedures and structure of such studies. Based on the comments of all the meeting attendees, Mr. Gamal rejected the study as representative of EEAA. It was also recommended to take the required procedures to delete the study from CMS website.
237. The slides making up Mr. Noor's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Monitoring illegal bird hunting along the Mediterranean coast of Egypt Autumn 2015 & Spring 2016

238. Mr. Noor led the presentation on this agenda item supported with technical details provided by his colleague, Waheed Salama Hamied.

239. The aim of the survey was to calculate the area of the coast where trammel nets were set, establish the amount of time the nets were in position, estimate the number of birds taken and the species affected, identify the different trapping methods and identify “hotspots”.
240. The coast was divided in to six blocks (as opposed to three for the socio-economic study), with Block 1 starting at Salloum on the Libyan border in the west moving east to Block 6 in Northern Sinai. The blocks were then split into three zones, the first being located at 0-1 kilometre from the shore, the second 1-3 km from the shore and the third 3-10 km from the shore.
241. Random sampling of 1km x 1km squares was undertaken with each square visited three times in autumn hunting season and twice in the winter. There was a problem obtaining access to Block 6 (Northern Sinai) because of security concerns and the need for permits. Some hostility from local tribal communities had been encountered in Block 1, and permission had to be sought from owners to enter tourist facilities. There were also logistical difficulties in reaching nets in time before they were emptied. It was also difficult to secure permits for night operations along the coast.
242. Trammel nets were set in two layers of fishing mesh that cost a few cents per metre. Some nets were set too close to the shoreline and some were of illegal design and were deployed in conjunction with calling devices. Lime sticks, Eb, Haleeg and Toraha nets and guns were used. Air rifles were legal and there was no need for a licence to use them.
243. Monitoring of the random kilometer squares found that hunting took place in five of the six blocks, but 61 per cent of the squares showed no sign of such activity. Most of the hunting (78 per cent) took place in the coastal strip and only 4 per cent in the 3-10 km zone. Trammel nets had been found in 21 per cent of the blocks surveyed, with 87 per cent of them in the coastal strip. The average length of the nets was 760 metres, the longest single one being over 1km. The average height was 2.8 metres. While only a fifth of all the squares in the coastal strip were surveyed, all had evidence of trapping taking place.
244. All calling devices (defined as any device making a noise to attract birds) were illegal, but poachers were now downloading apps to their mobile phones and connecting them to loud speakers. Most calling devices (78 per cent) were used in the intermediate strip and 22 per cent nearest the coast. Forty-four per cent of calling devices were used in conjunction with trammel nets.
245. Hunting was illegal in protected areas, of which there were four in Blocks 1-5.
246. Visits to markets, five of which were known to have sold birds in the past) produced no evidence of trade in migratory birds. The only species on offer were local sedentary species of decorative birds.
247. The results were, it was stressed, preliminary, and the methodology was complex with random squares and a statistician would have to work on the data.

248. Gary Timbrell (IAF) noted that some of the hotspots were in areas where falcons were trapped. He urged that the Task Force distinguish between falconers and trappers in the same way as it differentiated between hunters and poachers. He offered the support of the local IAF members whose expertise could be made available to the Task Force.
249. Omar Hanai (Raptors Club Egypt) said that illegal trapping of falcons was fueled by demand in the Gulf States. Peregrine falcons were the main target but other raptors were also used as decoys, leading to the deaths of many lanners and kestrels.
250. Mr. Baha El-Din (NCE) suggested that captive breeding might be a possible alternative to meet demand for falcons.
251. The slides making up Mr Noor's presentation can be found in the presentations section of the [MIKT page](#) on the CMS website.

Preparations for COP12: Potential content of a new resolution on illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds

252. Mr. Heredia introduced this topic saying that COP12 provided an opportunity to highlight the work of the Task Force and discuss whether other task forces in problem areas should be created.
253. Mr. Williams (Raptors MOU) posed a question to the MIKT about the need for another resolution beyond Resolution 11.16 adopted at Quito which was not time limited.
254. Mr. Schall (Germany) suggested that Parties came to COP12 with examples of the good work being done. He added that a new German JPO would soon be joining the avian team at the CMS Secretariat in October 2016.
255. Ms. Crockford (BirdLife International) said that the priority should be raising the political profile of MIKT. Holding COP12 in Manila in the Philippines presented an opportunity to raise awareness in East Asia where IKB was also a major problem. MIKT should try to build on World Migratory Bird Day, the theme of which had been IKB under the slogan "and when the skies fall silent?" Like Mr. Williams, she was not convinced that another Resolution was necessary but one would provide a platform for raising the issue of IKB to a wider audience.
256. Catherine Numa (IUCN) said that IUCN had adopted similar resolutions to CMS and three motions had been submitted to the forthcoming World Conservation Congress which would be held in Hawaii in September. The subjects of the three motions were: electrocution and collisions; illegal poisoning; and strengthening the conservation of migratory birds.

Adoption of the Cairo Declaration on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean

257. Mr. Heredia presented the draft of the Cairo Declaration a hard copy of which had been circulated to participants earlier in the meeting.
258. Participants were invited to make comments and the text, which was projected on screen, was amended accordingly.
259. The final version of the Declaration, prepared by the Secretariat taking into account the changes requested by the meeting, would be posted on the MIKT pages of the CMS website.

Any other business

260. There were no items raised under this point of the agenda.

Closure of the meeting

261. The Chair conducted a tour de table of the government representatives asking them what they thought of the meeting and what actions they would undertake on their return home.
262. Mr. Gerges (Lebanon) expressed concern that at the centre of the discussion had been a report compiled by an NGO with in some cases minimal consultation with national authorities. He set out a list of actions being undertaken in Lebanon to combat illegal killing of birds, citing a report presented at the Raptors Meeting of Signatories in Trondheim the previous year.
263. Ms. Mesbah (Morocco) said that a national Action Plan to address IKB would be prepared in her country.
264. Mr. Tahri (Tunisia) said that the main problem in his country was the enforcement of legislation.
265. Ms. Polić (Croatia) said that they were a bit disorganized at the moment but considered the Task Force as a very useful tool to address IKB.
266. The Chair reiterated that the socio-economic report had contained clear caveats which had been highlighted at the beginning of the meeting regarding the provisional nature of the figures. The report clearly indicated that there was a major problem with IKB, even if the precise extent was debatable.

267. A number of participants expressed their thanks to the Chair for his patient chairmanship, to the Host Government for the venue, the reception and the warm welcome and to the Secretariat for the preparation of the documents and logistical arrangements. The opportunity to discuss a wide-ranging problem with other affected countries from the region had been appreciated.
268. The Chair asked if the European Commission would be willing to fund the second meeting of the Task Force (not necessarily in Egypt) and possibly finance delegates to attend the CMS COP in 2017. Ms. Arvela could not make any promises.
269. Mr. Schall (Germany) thanked Mr. Rutigliano of CABS for his presentation adding that the illegal poisoning and shooting of raptors was becoming a concern in Germany.
270. Mr. Innes (ENPE) noted that the effects of IKB in the Mediterranean Region had an impact on the position of species elsewhere in Europe and instanced that the UK was seeing the knock-on effects of unsustainable taking of certain species such as the Turtle Dove which had suffered a 93 per cent decline in recent years. The meeting had provided fascinating insights into the background to the problems of IKB, especially the cultural aspects revealed by the Egyptian presentations.
271. Mr. Mundkur (Flyways WG) drew on his experience working in East and Southeast Asia and confirmed that IKB was not a problem confined to the Mediterranean but was having a serious impact along the East Asian - Australasian Flyway too. Thus there was need to look at ways of sharing lessons learnt and best practice between flyways, with the CMS providing the ideal framework for this.
272. Mr. Baha El-Din (NCE) expressed his thanks to those that had organized the meeting and to those that were conducting the fieldwork such as Mr. Noor. He noted that his late wife Mendy had passed away at about the same time as the recent increase in attention given to IKB.
273. Mr. Lachmann (NABU) was pleased to have had the chance to participate in the meeting as an observer representing NABU, the German BirdLife partner. He had been shocked to learn of the extent of IKB, which was affecting bird populations in his home country. It appeared that the Task Force was heading in the right direction and he was confident that there would be good news to report to CMS COP12 in 2017 and the efforts of the Task Force for the Mediterranean would serve as a model for other regions. He cited the example of Malta, where the number of birds killed or taken illegally had declined dramatically in a very short time.
274. Mr. Heredia (UNEP/CMS) summarized by saying that after a busy three days a great deal of progress had been made representing a solid start to the work of the Task Force. Some key documents had been advanced and a great deal learned about the problem of IKB especially as it affected Egypt. It was, however, encouraging to see that much work was already being done. The meeting had been conducted in an amicable spirit aided by the generosity and welcome of the hosts and he thanked the Chair, UNDP, the EU and all that had contributed

to the successful outcomes. As a token of gratitude, he presented the Chair with a CMS pen and pencil set.

275. The Chair expressed his gratitude to the meeting for the confidence shown in him in electing him to the chair and after adding his thanks to all the participants declared the meeting closed at 18.00.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I - List of Participants

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