

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Ardea melanocephala in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

1.1. Classis	Aves
1.2. Ordo	Ciconiiformes
1.3. Familia	Ardeidae
1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies	<u>Ardea melanocephala</u> Vigors & Children 1826. Monotypic
1.5. Common names	
English:	Black-headed Heron
Spanish:	Garza Cabecinegra
French:	Heron melanocephale

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

Monotypic, occurring widely throughout Africa south of the Sahara. Movements, if any, in the southern part of the range are unknown. Apparently a rains migrant in Central Africa and the northern tropics, moving north during the wet season and retreating south of 12°N during the dry season.

2.2. Population

Only one population can be identified.

- Entire population: In the range 100,000-1,000,000; increasing (Rose & Scott 1993).

Widespread and locally common, but with a rather patchy distribution. Throughout most of Africa it is the commonest large heron. The species has probably benefitted from some human alterations to the environment, notably the increase in number and extent of open and irrigated areas (del Hoyo et al. 1992). During the African Waterfowl Census of January 1993, the highest national totals were from Cameroon (760), Niger (627), Nigeria (346) and Senegal (378) (Taylor 1993).

2.3. Habitat

Largely terrestrial and associated much less with wetlands than most herons; typically found in damp, open pastureland, sometimes far from water. Also occurs in marshes, on the margins of rivers and lakes, in rice fields and other cultivation, in forest clearings and on estuarine shores. Over much of its range, it seems to feed equally in terrestrial and semi-aquatic habitats. Usually nests in colonies in trees, often close to or within villages, but also nests in reed-beds or on the ground (del Hoyo et al. 1992).

2.4. Migrations

Sedentary in the equatorial zone, but elsewhere apparently migratory, with movements related to the wet and dry seasons. In West Africa, moves north into the Sahel for the rainy season (May-October); in Northeast, East and Central Africa, birds migrate to drier zones during the rains.

3. **Threat data**

3.1. Direct threats to the population

None known. Commonly breeds in trees in villages, and apparently seldom disturbed.

3.2. Habitat destruction

None known. Much less of a wetland species than most other herons, and therefore less affected by wetland loss and degradation, while benefitting from an expansion in irrigated agriculture and pastureland.

3.3. Indirect threats

Possibly at risk from contamination of wetlands with pesticides and other chemicals, but details lacking.

3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

3.5. National and international utilization

None known.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1. National protection status

Protected under national legislation in Angola, Botswana, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania and Uganda; partially protected as a game species in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria.

4.2. International protection status

None known.

4.3. Additional protection needs

The species is considered to have a favourable conservation status, and is not in need of any additional special protection measures at the present time.

5. **Range States**

See attached table.

6. **Comments from Range States**

7. **Additional remarks**

8. **References**

- Brown, L.H., Urban, E.K. & Newman, K. (1982). The Birds of Africa. Volume I. Academic Press, London & New York.
- del Hoyo, J., Elliott A. & Sargatal, J. (eds). (1992). Handbook of the Birds of the World. Volume 1: Ostrich to Ducks. Lynx Edicions, Barcelona.
- Hancock, J. & Elliott, H. (1978). The Herons of the World. London Editions, London.
- Rose, P.M. & Scott, D.A. (1993). Waterfowl Population Estimates. Draft report presented at the Fifth Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Ramsar Convention, 9-16 June 1993, Kushiro, Japan. IWRB, Slimbridge.
- Taylor, V. (1993). African Waterfowl Census 1993. IWRB, Slimbridge, U.K.

Taxon: <i>Ardea melanocephala</i>		
Population		
(a) Entire population		
State	Pop.	Status
Angola	a	?
Benin	a	Wr
Botswana	a	?
Burkina Faso	a	Sr
Burundi	a	?
Cameroon	a	Wr
Central African Republic	a	Wr
Chad	a	Sr
Congo	a	Wr
Cote d'Ivoire	a	Wr
Djibouti	a	?
Equatorial Guinea	a	Wr
Ethiopia	a	Sr
Gabon	a	Wr
Gambia	a	Sr
Ghana	a	Wr
Guinea	a	Wr
Guinea-Bissau	a	Wr
Kenya	a	Wr
Lesotho	a	?
Liberia	a	Wr
Madagascar	a	V
Malawi	a	?
Mali	a	Sr
Mauritania	a	Sr
Mozambique	a	?
Namibia	a	?
Niger	a	Sr
Nigeria	a	Wr
Rwanda	a	?
Senegal	a	Sr
Sierra Leone	a	Wr
Somalia	a	Wr

South Africa	a	?
Sudan	a	Sr
Swaziland	a	?
Tanzania	a	?
Togo	a	Wr
Uganda	a	Wr
Zaire	a	Wr
Zambia	a	?
Zimbabwe	a	?

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