

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

A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Larus leucophthalmus in Appendix II.

B. PROPONENT: Government of the Federal Republic of Germany

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT

1. Taxon

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 1.1. Classis                  | Aves   |
| 1.2. Ordo                     | Charadriiformes  |
| 1.3. Familia                  | Laridae  |
| 1.4. Genus/Species/Subspecies | <u>Larus leucophthalmus</u> Temminck 1825<br>Monotypic |
| 1.5. Common names             |  |
| English:                      | White-eyed Gull  |
| Spanish:                      | Gaviota de Aden Piquirroja                             |
| French:                       | Goeland a iris blanc                                   |

2. Biological data

2.1. Distribution

The species is confined to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, breeding in Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Yemen.

2.2. Population

Only one population is recognized.  
- Entire population: 20,000; stable (Rose & Scott 1993).

The largest known breeding concentration is on islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez, Egypt, where between 1,500 and 2,000 pairs are thought to breed (Jennings et al. 1985). There are reported to be thousands nesting on the Aibat and Saad Din Islands off Zeyla in Somalia, 1,400 adults nesting on ten islands in the Dahlak Archipelago in Ethiopia, and 200 pairs on Mukawar Island in Sudan (Urban et al. 1986). The total breeding population has been estimated at 5,000-7,000 pairs; numbers are apparently stable.

2.3. Habitat

Breeds on tropical and subtropical marine coasts, especially on inshore islands and islets, on bare rock surfaces, on sandy flats, or on exposed hard-pan near the sea. Feeds inshore and offshore; less of a scavenger than L. hemprichii, but occasionally follows ships and visits refuse tips. A colonial nester (Cramp & Simmons 1983; Urban et al. 1986).

2.4. Migrations

A short-distance migrant to its northernmost breeding areas; mainly resident in the southern parts of its range. The species is virtually

restricted at all seasons to the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, but shows a pronounced southward shift in winter (November to March), when it is scarce north of Hurgada (Egypt). Few birds wander further south than Somalia, but it has straggled to Kenya, and occasionally wanders east to Oman and southeastern Iran (once). The breeding grounds in Somalia are occupied in April (Urban *et al.* 1986).

### 3. Threat data

#### 3.1. Direct threats to the population

The bird's habit of nesting colonially in the open results in exploitation through collection of eggs by humans for food. Predation on eggs by humans and Larus hemprichii has been reported in Somalia (Urban *et al.* 1986).

#### 3.2. Habitat destruction

None known; most of the breeding islands are remote and seldom visited. However, as the species is confined to a small number of breeding sites, it is particularly vulnerable to habitat loss in the future.

#### 3.3. Indirect threats

The bird is permanently at risk from floating and beached oil.

#### 3.4. Threats connected especially with migrations

None known.

#### 3.5. National and international utilization

Some egg-collection for human consumption.

### 4. Protection status and needs

#### 4.1. National protection status

In Africa, fully protected under national legislation in Ethiopia and Somalia.

#### 4.2. International protection status

Larus leucophthalmus is listed in Appendix I of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals. The species is listed in category 'K' (Insufficiently known) in the 1990 edition of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals (IUCN 1990).

#### 4.3. Additional protection needs

Larus leucophthalmus is listed in the category 'Threatened' in the Draft Management Plan for the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds because of its IUCN listing as a globally threatened species. See attached note on additional protection needs for species and populations with an unfavourable conservation status.

5. Range States

See attached table.

6. Comments from Range States

7. Additional remarks

8. References

- Collar, N.J. & Andrew, P. (1988). Birds to Watch. The ICBP World Checklist of Threatened Birds. ICBP Technical Publication No.8. ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.
- Cramp, S. & Simmons, K.E.L. (eds). (1983). Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Vol.3: Waders to Gulls. Oxford University Press. Oxford, London and New York.
- Gallagher, M.D., Scott, D.A., Ormond, R.F.G., Connor, R.J. & Jennings, M.C. (1984). The Distribution and Conservation of Seabirds Breeding on the Coasts and Islands of Iran and Arabia. In Croxall, P.J., Evans, P.G.H. & Schreiber, R.W. (eds), Status and Conservation of the World's Seabirds: 421-456. ICBP Technical Publication No.2. ICBP, Cambridge, U.K.
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- IUCN (1990). 1990 IUCN Red List of Threatened Animals. Compiled by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. IUCN-The World Conservation Union, Gland, Switzerland.
- Jennings, M.C., Heathcote, P.C., Parr, D. & Baha el Din, S.M. (1985). Ornithological Survey of the Ras Dib area and the islands at the mouth of the Gulf of Suez, Egypt. Report prepared for B.P. Petroleum Development Co. (Egypt) Ltd.
- 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.
- Urban, E.K., Fry, C.H. & Keith, S. (1986). The Birds of Africa. Volume II. Academic Press, London & Orlando.

|   |                    |        |
|---|--------------------|--------|
| Taxon: <i>Larus leucophthalmus</i>                        |                    |        |
| Population  |                    |        |
| (a) Entire population                                     |                    |        |
| State   | Pop.               | Status |
| Egypt   | a                  | Sr     |
| Ethiopia  | a                  | Wsr    |
| Iran  | a                  | V      |
| Israel  | a                  | V      |
| Jordan  | a                  | V      |
| Kenya   | a                  | V      |
| Oman  | a                  | V      |
| Saudi Arabia  | a                  | Rs     |
| Somalia   | a                  | Wsr    |
| Sudan   | a                  | Srw    |
| Yemen   | a                  | Wsr    |
| 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 |                    |        |