



ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF BIRD SPECIES LISTED IN ANNEX II OF THE PROTOCOL CONCERNING SPECIALLY PROTECTED AREAS (SPAs) AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

AUDOUIN'S GULL *Larus audouinii*

Audouin's Gull is one of the very few genuinely pelagic gulls, that is to say that it spends the greater part of its time at sea, and only comes to land to nest on a small number of Mediterranean islands.

OSPREY *Pandion haliaetus*

The Osprey, a cosmopolitan fish-eating bird of prey which dives from a great height then catches its food with its feet, nests mainly in northern Europe and America, but a small nesting population still survives on Mediterranean sea cliffs.

SANDWICH TERN *Sterna sandvicensis*

The Sandwich Tern was described for the first time near the English town of Sandwich, hence its scientific and English names. (It was Earl Sandwich who invented the snack which shares its name with the tern).

DALMATIAN PELICAN *Pelecanus crispus*

The Dalmatian Pelican, supposedly originating from Dalmatia in the Mediterranean and much rarer than White Pelican, is globally threatened with an unfavourable conservation status.

WHITE PELICAN *Pelecanus onocrotalus*

One of the world's most striking birds, recognised everywhere in folklore and popular culture, the White Pelican still nests in Mediterranean Europe then migrates down the Nile Valley to winter in the Great Lakes of Eastern Africa.

PYGMY CORMORANT *Phalacrocorax pygmeus*

The Pygmy Cormorant, classified as globally threatened, is a cormorant inhabiting large reed-beds in deltas and coastal lagoons rather than the sea.

STORM PETREL *Hydrobates pelagicus*

Storm Petrels fly so close to the waves that ancient mariners used to say they were walking on the water.

CORY'S SHEARWATER *Calonectris diomedea*

Since they are such poor walkers, shearwaters come to land mainly at night, so as to avoid terrestrial predators. They have loud frightening nocturnal calls which sound like ghosts.

MEDITERRANEAN SHEARWATER *Puffinus mauretanicus & P. yelkouan*

Shearwaters are ocean birds, well adapted to constant flight over the high seas, but poorly equipped for walking on land, as their feet are set so far back on their bodies.

ELEONORA'S FALCON *Falco eleonorae*

Eleonora's Falcon, a small highly specialised bird of prey, nests on Mediterranean sea-cliffs and delays nesting until the end of the summer so that it can feed its young on small migrant birds which cross the Mediterranean to reach their African winter quarters.

GREATER FLAMINGO *Phoenicopterus roseus*

A symphony of colour, the Greater Flamingo is equipped with an extraordinary beak which enables it to filter small crustaceans from brackish and salt water.

SHAG *Phalacrocorax aristotelis*

The Shag is the Mediterranean little brother of the nordic Great Cormorant. It lives in coastal cliffs and small rock islands. This species is very sensitive to the disturbance caused by man.

LESSER CRESTED TERN *Sterna bengalensis*

More than 95% of the Mediterranean population of the Lesser Crested Tern, a mysterious species, little known by ornithologists, nests on two Libyan islands, then seems to leave to winter along the coast of West Africa.

LITTLE TERN *Sterna albibronis*

The Little Tern, smallest of the family, nests on Mediterranean beaches, and though still widespread, finds it hard to tolerate disturbance caused by tourists.

Geographical scope of the plan

The plan covers the sea and countries with a Mediterranean coastline, excluding the parts of these countries, which are not of a Mediterranean bio-climate.

Action Plan objectives and targets

- To maintain and/or restore the population levels of bird species in the SPA Protocol's Annex II to a favourable conservation status and to ensure their long-term conservation.
- To share knowledge and expertise between Mediterranean countries.
- To co-ordinate efforts among Mediterranean countries and other relevant initiatives and agreements, so as to ensure the implementation of these activities.
- To encourage a synergistic approach among Mediterranean countries in the protection of these bird species and their habitats.
- To encourage research to fill the many gaps in knowledge of coastal and pelagic birds in the Mediterranean, particularly of seabird distribution and movements, and of their feeding, moulting and wintering areas at sea.

Actions to achieve the objectives of the Action Plan

Protected areas

- Areas of sea important for birds should be identified and given legal protection status.
- The breeding sites of all threatened species should be legally established as protected areas with an adequate management plan.
- Coastal and marine protected areas of importance to birds should be continuously monitored and properly managed.

Legislation

- Throughout the Mediterranean, species should be afforded legal protection by the Contracting Parties in countries where they breed as well as in countries where they occur during other seasons, as per the guidelines provided by RAC/SPA.
- Legislation should include dissuasive penalties.
- Assessment of environmental impact on these species and their habitats by any type of development should be legally obligatory.

Research

- In view of the existing gaps in knowledge of coastal and pelagic birds and their habitats in the Mediterranean, especially of their movements and distribution at sea, priority must be given to the mapping of breeding, feeding, moulting and wintering areas of the species concerned.
- Resources should be made available for researchers to fill the gaps in knowledge, such as for the establishment of a Mediterranean seabirds atlas, and for monitoring population size and breeding success of less well-known species.

Awareness, Education & Training

- Contracting Parties should promulgate legislation concerning endangered bird species.
- Contracting Parties should seek and/or provide the training of personnel for monitoring, conserving and managing protected areas of importance to birds.
- The organisation of ornithological training courses *in situ* for trainers and personnel should be initiated and supported by RAC/SPA and the partners of the Action Plan.
- Public awareness and education programmes and campaigns highlighting the vulnerability of threatened species, directed particularly at stakeholders and decision makers, should be planned and

implemented in co-operation with non-governmental organisations.

National Action Plans

- Contracting Parties should establish National Action Plans for the conservation of endangered and threatened bird species in the Mediterranean.
- National Action Plans should take into consideration the implementation of the specific actions relevant to the particular countries proposed in this Action Plan.
- Future National Action Plans should address the current factors causing loss or decline of the bird species in Annex II, suggest appropriate subjects for legislation, give priority to the protection and management of sites, and ensure continued research and monitoring of populations and sites.
- Contracting Parties should apply and implement any Action Plans already in existence.

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