



Zadar Declaration

The following declaration, to be referred to as "Zadar Declaration", was adopted by the participants of the 4th Adriatic Flyway¹ Conference, which took place in Zadar, Croatia, on 25-29 April 2022.

The EuroNatur Foundation, together with the Adriatic Flyway partnership (Društvo za opazovanje in proučevanje ptic Slovenije (DOPPS), Slovenia, Association BIOM, Croatia, and the Croatian Society for the Birds and Nature Protection (CSBNP), the Ornithological Society "Naše ptice", Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Center for Protection and Research of Birds (CZIP), Montenegro, Albanian Ornithological Society (AOS) & Protection and Preservation of Natural Environment in Albania (PPNEA), Bird Protection and Study Society of Serbia (BPSSS), Macedonian Ecological Society (MES), North Macedonia), BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, the Vulture Conservation Foundation and the participants of the 4th Adriatic Flyway Conference are

CONCERNED by the large number of mostly migratory species of wild birds in Europe, which are significantly declining in number, some of them very rapidly;

ALERTED by the extent of illegal killing and taking of wild birds along the Adriatic Flyway and by the illegal trade of wild birds from the Adriatic Flyway countries into (other) member states of the

¹ The Adriatic Flyway covers the countries of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia

European Union (EU)², which contributes to the further decline of populations of wild birds in Europe;

SUPPORTIVE to the ongoing initiatives to tackle illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region, including the “Roadmap towards eliminating illegal killing, trapping and trade of birds”³ of the European Commission, the “Rome Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Eradicating Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade in Wild Birds in Europe and the Mediterranean region”⁴ of the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS, Bonn Convention), and the LIFE Against Bird Crime project⁵;

ALERTED by the extent of further threats to wild birds along the Adriatic Flyway, especially by electrocution on and collision with energy infrastructure⁶ and by poisoning by lead and poisoned baits⁷;

SUPPORTIVE to the ongoing initiatives to reduce the electrocution on and collision with energy infrastructure, such as the CMS Energy Task Force⁸ and the Renewables Grid Initiative⁹;

SUPPORTIVE to the ongoing initiatives to reduce the dispersal of lead into the environment, including the ban of use of lead gunshot in wetlands in all EEA countries¹⁰ and the proposed restriction on lead in outdoor shooting, hunting and fishing in the EU¹¹;

SUPPORTIVE to the ongoing initiatives to reduce the illegal poisoning of wildlife, such as the LIFE Balkan Detox project;

AWARE that along the Adriatic Flyway Slovenia and Croatia are EU member states, where the EU’s Birds and Habitat Directives^{12,13} apply, that Serbia, Montenegro, Albania and North Macedonia are in accession negotiations to join the EU and that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a potential EU accession candidate.

The EuroNatur Foundation, together with the Adriatic Flyway partnership (see above), BirdLife Europe and Central Asia, the Vulture Conservation Foundation and the participants of the 4th Adriatic Flyway Conference therefore

RECALL the Fruška Gora Declaration¹⁴ adopted at the 3rd Adriatic Flyway Conference in Serbia, on 22 March 2018;

² As presented at the conference; for the book of abstracts see https://www.euronatur.org/fileadmin/docs/Vogelijagd-Kampagne/AF4_Book_of_Abstracts_FINAL.pdf. See also reported national figures in separately published reports, e.g. for Serbia under <https://poslednjilet.rs/>, for Slovenia under <https://stopkrivolov.ptice.si/o-krivolovu/> or for Montenegro under <https://czip.me/reports/?lang=en>.

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/conservation/wildbirds/docs/Roadmap%20illegal%20killing.pdf>

⁴ https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms_mikt4_inf.5_rome-strategic-plan-2020-2030_e.pdf

⁵ <https://flightforsurvival.org/life-against-bird-crimes/>

⁶ <https://poslednjilet.rs/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Izvestaj-o-elektrokciji-final.pdf>

⁷ <https://balkandetoxlife.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2022/04/Balkan-Vultures-Poison-Study-2022.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.cms.int/en/taskforce/energy-task-force>

⁹ <https://renewables-grid.eu/>

¹⁰ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32021R0057&from=EN>

¹¹ <https://echa.europa.eu/hot-topics/lead-in-shot-bullets-and-fishing-weights>

¹² Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds

¹³ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

¹⁴ https://www.euronatur.org/fileadmin/docs/Vogelijagd-Kampagne/Fruska_Gora_Declaration.pdf

APPEAL to the Governments of the countries along the Adriatic Flyway to ensure the legal protection of wild birds and their habitats in line with the provisions under the Bonn and Bern Conventions and the EU's Birds and Habitat Directives, in order to maintain wild bird species and their habitats in a good conservation status;

URGE the Governments of the countries along the Adriatic Flyway¹ to take bolder action for strengthening the zero-tolerance approach to illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds (IKB), specifically by developing, adopting, financing and implementing National Action Plans to effectively reduce IKB within their countries, as foreseen in the Rome Strategic Plan⁴, which was adopted by all mentioned Governments;

REQUEST the Secretariat of the *Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals* (CMS, Bonn Convention), together with the treaty's *Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean* (CMS-MIKT), as well as the Secretariat of *Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats* (Bern Convention) to assist the governments of their range countries in the process of eliminating illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds along the Adriatic Flyway;

REQUEST the European Commission to address the illegal killing and taking of wild birds in its member states and accession candidates along the Adriatic Flyway, as well as the illegal trade of wild birds from the Adriatic Flyway countries into (other) member states of the EU, and to increase its efforts to eliminate the illegal killing, taking and trade of wild birds along the Adriatic Flyway, together with the governments of the respective countries;

REQUEST the Governments, grid operators and electricity companies of the countries along the Adriatic Flyway to increase their engagement for a reduction of electrocution and collision of wild birds with energy infrastructure in coalition with all relevant stakeholders and by making use of the already existing international and national guidance and the initiatives mentioned above;

CALLS ON the EU Member States, the European Commission, Council and Parliament to realize the 'Zero Pollution Ambition' and ensure the successful total restriction of lead ammunition under the current REACH process in order to protect the health of people and the environment from the toxic effects of lead;

APPEAL to the Governments of the countries along the Adriatic Flyway¹ to ban not only the use of lead gunshot in wetlands, but also the use and deposition of lead in the environment *per se*;

URGE national governments along the Adriatic Flyway¹ to step up their efforts in tackling the illegal use of poisoned baits to eradicate wildlife, and to adopt and implement the national anti-poisoning plans that have been developed as part of the LIFE Balkan Detox project, also by making use of the capacity gained during the Wildlife Crime Academy¹⁵ and capacity building initiatives developed in the framework of other projects (e.g. the LIFE SWIPE project)¹⁶.

Zadar, Croatia, on 28 April 2022

¹⁵ <https://balkandetoxlife.eu/wildlife-crime-academy/>

¹⁶ <https://stopwildlifecrime.eu/>