



Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission

Working Group on the State of the Environment and Nature
Conservation

STATE & CONSERVATION
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Online, 4-8 October 2021

Document title	Outcome of the BfN-JWGBIRD workshop on migratory birds
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Agenda Item	3J - Progress of relevant HELCOM expert groups and projects
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Background

Following a workshop on migration routes of seabirds over the Baltic Sea convened on 20-22 November 2018 at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat in cooperation with JWGBIRD, several knowledge gaps were identified with regard to advancing knowledge on bird migration to support work of JWGBIRD. It was agreed that a designated sub-group will be established for this purpose under JWGBIRD. To support the establishment of the sub-group on bird migration under JWGBIRD, an online workshop was organised in collaboration with the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and JWGBIRD on 8-9 September 2021. A particular focus during the workshop was put on drafting of a workplan for the group to guide further work.

This document contains the outcome of the BfN-JWGBIRD HELCOM workshop on migratory birds.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to take note of the information.



BfN-JWGBIRD HELCOM workshop on migratory birds

Online 8-9 September 2021

MIGRATORY BIRD WS 2-2021



Outcome of the BfN-JWGBIRD workshop on migratory birds

Introduction

1. Following a workshop on migration routes of seabirds over the Baltic Sea convened on 20-22 November 2018 at the premises of HELCOM Secretariat in cooperation with JWGBIRD, several knowledge gaps were identified with regard to advancing knowledge on bird migration to support work of JWGBIRD. STATE&CONSERVATION 11-2019 considered the proposals for further work on identifying migration routes and staging areas of migrating seabirds (document 3N-5 t that meeting) and agreed that a Migratory birds correspondence group should be established, preferably as a subgroup to JWGBIRD. To support the establishment of the sub-group on bird migration under JWBBIRD, an online workshop was organised in collaboration with the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN) and JWGBIRD on 8-9 September 2021.

2. The aim of the regional Workshop was to serve as a kick-off event for the envisaged ICES/OSPAR/HELCOM sub-group on bird migration under JWGBIRD, aiming at bringing together expertise on bird migration, collating data on migratory routes and discussing methodologies to produce high-quality maps of bird migration routes across the North-East Atlantic and Baltic Sea. Given these objectives, a particular focus during the workshop was put on drafting of a workplan for the group to guide further work.

3. The Workshop was attended by 50 experts from the Contracting Parties from the HELCOM, OSPAR and ICES regions, as well as several Observer organizations. The List of Participants is contained as **Annex 1**.

4. The workshop was hosted by BfN and chaired by Mr. Janos Hennicke (BfN), Mr. Dieter Boedeker (BfN), Mr. Ommo Hüppop (Institute of Avian Research, Germany) and co-chair of JWGBIRD Mr. Volker Dierschke (GaviaEco Research, Germany). Laura Kaikkonen, HELCOM Associate Professional Secretary acted as the secretary of the Workshop.

Agenda Item 1 Welcome, Introduction and Background

5. The Workshop took note of an introduction to HELCOM Recommendation 34E/1 "Safeguarding important bird habitats and migration routes in the Baltic Sea from negative effects of wind and wave energy production at sea" and concretized actions in the new Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAPUp 2021 - 2030) as presented by Dieter Boedeker, BfN.

6. The Workshop took note of existing international agreements on migratory bird conservation in the HELCOM-OSPAR area, as presented by Nina Mikander (Ministry of the Environment), Finland.

7. The Workshop highlighted the importance of accounting for the existing international agreements and ongoing work in any subsequent work of the bird migration group.

8. The Workshop took note of concerns from the workshop participants that while several recommendations are in place, there seems to be inadequate support from governments and planning agencies for protecting bird migration routes in terms of e.g., offshore energy construction.

9. The Workshop took note of the outcomes of the HELCOM workshop on migratory waterbirds, Helsinki, November 2018 and the associated recommendations from the workshop as presented by Volker Dierschke, Germany.

10. The Workshop emphasized, based on the outcomes of the previous workshop, the importance of weighting species based on population size and vulnerability to collision.

11. The Workshop noted that the flying altitude, both within and between species, can vary notably, e.g. depending on weather and purpose of flight, which makes it more challenging to include it as a parameter to the products of the workshop. The Workshop further noted that the flying altitude of many bird species, not only waterbirds, varies when they migrate over sea areas, and are thus more at risk of collision with offshore structures.

Agenda Item 2 How to identify and map migration routes?

12. The Workshop took note of the following presentations:

- Detecting the migration of birds using weather radar data (Ommo Hüppop, Institute of Avian Research, Germany)
- Bat migration over the Sea (Antje Seebens-Hoyer, NABU, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Germany)
- Speedupdate: How to protect migration routes? (Sandra Vardeh, BfN, Germany)
- Identification of routes and threats during migration in small Charadrius plovers – a novel approach using super light-weighted GPS tags in the Wadden Sea (*Dominic Cimiotti (MOIN), Germany*)
- Tracking the migration of Caspian terns and Lesser Black-backed Gulls (Ulrik Lötberg, BirdLife Sweden)

13. The Workshop emphasized that offshore constructions present a threat to all types of birds migrating over sea areas, and not only waterbird species.

Agenda Item 3 Potential and actual threats to birds migrating over sea

14. The Workshop noted that migration of terrestrial birds across the sea areas also needs to be considered in spatial planning.

15. The Workshop took note of the following presentations

- Assessment of collision risk for vulnerable bird species with offshore wind farms (*Aonghais Cook (BTO) Scotland*)
- Bird migration over the sea: methods, space-time patterns and conflicts with offshore wind farms (Stefan Garthe & Phillip Schwemmer (FTZ), Germany)
- Air space as habitat? (Robb Diehl, US Geological Survey, USA)

Agenda Item 4 Terms of Reference and workplan for a subgroup “Bird Migration” under JWGBIRD

16. The Workshop took note of the updated draft Terms of Reference and workplan for the planned subgroup as presented by the HELCOM Secretariat.

17. The Workshop reviewed the Terms of Reference and workplan for the group (ANNEX 2) and discussed having the subgroup work independently (to the extent possible), as the main group is already very big. The Workshop took note that JWGBIRD co-chairs support this proposal.

18. The Workshop took note of a comment from BirdLife Sweden, with regard to the objective to “Produce more specific species and sensitivity maps of a given area” that little effort has been made to produce sensitivity maps, and raised a question as to how to make authorities aware of the obligation. Workshop further noted that to work towards the group’s main goal in minimising negative impacts from renewable energy on migrating birds, BirdLife Sweden considers foreseeing and stopping mass collision events as critical. “Foreseeing mass collision events” means to use e.g. weather data and migration models to

momentarily shut down wind power plants when needed and recommends that implementation of such systems has to be highly prioritised in the group.

19. The Workshop highlighted the importance of clarifying through the ToRs and the group's work the difference between birds that migrate over seas as opposed to birds that inhabit marine areas year-round.
20. The Workshop noted that for many small birds, producing detailed maps will not be possible, whereas such map products may be feasible for larger groups of species and that this should be reflected either in the ToR or the workplan.
21. With regard to the geographical scope of the work, the Workshop discussed whether Arctic areas will be part of the group's work and highlighted that the decision should be made by HELCOM, OSPAR and ICES.
22. The Workshop discussed data availability underpinning the group's work and noted that the group's work relies on various data types, including having access to up-to-date information on planned windfarms and other offshore constructions. The Workshop acknowledged that information on planned (offshore) windfarms difficult to obtain/not easily available, further complicating predictive planning.
23. With regard to the organization of the work, the workshop highlighted the need for the group to focus its work on all bird migration over sea areas. Given the amount of work and additional expertise required to carry out the tasks for the group, the Workshop suggested HELCOM, OSPAR and ICES to consider the opportunity for the group to work independently from JWGBIRD.
24. The Workshop highlighted challenges in attracting relevant expertise to the group and suggested that HELCOM, ICES and OSPAR may also invite/approach relevant experts to join the group. The Workshop particularly highlighted the need for GIS expertise for many of the expected outputs.
25. The Workshop further noted that given the extensive resources required to carry out the group's work, it may be beneficial to outline an estimate of the required resources be provided, or alternatively, the Contracting Parties could be reminded to ensure that nominated experts have time to work on the group's tasks.
26. The Workshop took note that the workplan and ToR of the group will be initially evaluated by the HELCOM State&Conservation Working Group in their meeting on 4-8 October 2021, after which further information on the organization of the group will be available.
27. The Workshop took note that interested experts are invited to express their interest to join the group to the HELCOM Secretariat (laura.kaikkonen@helcom.fi).
28. On behalf of the organizers, Dieter Boedeker thanked all the speakers of the Workshop and all those who participated in the discussions or listened with interest. He expressed his hope that the participants have benefited from the workshop and that they gained new insights. Finally, he expressed special thanks to Laura Kaikkonen from the HELCOM Secretariat, and all co-hosts of the Workshop Volker Dierschke, Ommo Hüppop, Janos Hennicke, Karolin Schulze and Gesine Lange.

Annex 1. List of participants

Name		Organization
Antje	Seebens-Hoyer	Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union
Antonio	Vulcano	BirdLife International
Antra	Stīpniece	Latvian Ornithological Society
Antti	Below	Metsähallitus Parks and Wildlife Finland
Aonghais	Cook	British Trust for Ornithology
Arndt	Wellbrock	Institute of Avian Research "Vogelwarte Helgoland"
Daniel	Bengtsson	BirdLife Sweden
Dieter	Boedeker	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany
Dirk	Bernotat	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany
Dominic	Cimiotti	Michael-Otto institute, Nature and Biodiversity Conservation Union
Dominik	Marchowski	Museum and Institute of Zoology Polish Academy of Sciences
Dominique	van Eick	VLAMV e.V.
Dorota	Łukasik	Chief Inspectorate Of Environmental Protection
Fredrik	Haas	Lund University, Sweden
Gesine	Lange	Consultant for the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany
Hans	Schekkerman	Sovon Dutch Centre for Bird Research
Helen	Wade	NatureScot
Henrik	Skov	DHI, Danish Hydraulic Institute
Jacob	Davies	British Trust for Ornithology
Jan	Kieckbusch	State Agency for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Areas Schleswig-Holstein (LLUR), Federal State Institution for Bird Conservation
Janos	Hennicke	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany
Julia	Loshchagina	Institute of geography RAS
Julie	Miller	Marine Scotland Science
Julius	Morkūnas	Lithuanian ornithological society
Katrin	Schikorr	DUH, Deutsche Umwelthilfe
Klaus	Günther	Schutzstation Wattenmeer
Kristine	Brüggemann	University of Veterinary Medicine Hannover
Lara	Salvany	International Council for the Exploration of the Sea
Laura	Kaikkonen	HELCOM
Markus	Billerbeck	German Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency

Matt	Parson	Joint Nature Conservation Commitment, UK
Mindaugas	Dagys	Nature Research Centre Lithuania
Morten	Frederiksen	Aarhus University, Department of Bioscience
Nele	Tschense	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
Niclas	Lignell	BirdLife Sweden
Nina	Mikander	Finish Ministry of the Environment
Nuno	Oliveira	SPEA
Oliver	Schall	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
Ommo	Hüppop	Institute of Avian Research "Vogelwarte Helgoland"
Petr	Glazov	Institute of geography RAS
Philipp	Schwemmer	Research and Technology Centre (FTZ), University of Kiel
Rasa	Morkūne	Marine Research Institute, Klaipeda University
Robert	Diehl	US Geological Survey, Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center
Sandra	Vardeh	Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany
Sergey	Dereliev	UNEP/AEWA
Stefan	Garthe	Research and Technology Centre (FTZ), University of Kiel
Thomas	Borchers	Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
Ulrik	Lötberg	BirdLife Sweden
Verónica	Neves	Okeanos R&D Centre of the Azores University
Volker	Dierschke	Gavia EcoResearch

Annex 2 Workshop Programme



**"WORKSHOP on
Bird migration in the OSPAR
and HELCOM Regions"**

**Wednesday, 8 September to Thursday, 9
September 2021**

organised by the
German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation
(BfN) together with the HELCOM Secretariat

online!

Topics and goals of the workshop:

This regional workshop will serve as kick-off event for the envisaged ICES/OSPAR/HELCOM sub-group on bird migration under JWG Bird, aiming at bundling expertise, collating data and discussing methodologies to produce high-quality maps of bird migration routes across the North-East Atlantic and Baltic Sea. Particular focus during the workshop will be put on drafting of a workplan for the group to guide further work.

In order to contribute to the implementation of OSPAR and HELCOM Programmes on safeguarding migratory birds and in line with the aim of Germany's HELCOM chairmanship to support the tracking of the routes of migratory birds, the outcome of the workshop should prepare the ground for future work on the development of conservation measures and facilitate cooperation in the OSPAR and HELCOM region.

Agenda

- Item 1
Welcome, Introduction and Background
- Item 2
During this session various ways to identify bird migration over the sea will be presented and discussed
- Item 3
Presentations and discussions about potential and actual threats to birds migrating over sea
- Item 4
In this session the TOR will be presented and the draft workplan for the subgroup on bird migration will be discussed.

Agenda items 1 to 3 will be dealt with on Wednesday, 8 September (evtl. also beginning of Thursday) and Agenda item 4 will be discussed on Thursday, 9 September.

On Thursday, unannounced short speedupinfos from participants will also be possible.

Time table	
Wednesday , 8 September 2021	
Agenda Item 1	Welcome, Introduction and Background <i>Moderation Dieter Boedeker (BfN), Germany</i>
09:00	Welcome and introduction of participants "tour de table" <i>Janos Hennicke & Dieter Boedeker (BfN), Germany</i>
09.20	HELCOM Recommendation 34E/1 "Safeguarding important bird habitats and migration routes in the Baltic Sea from negative effects of wind and wave energy production at sea" and concretized actions in the new Baltic Sea Action Plan (BSAPup 2021 - 2030) <i>Dieter Boedeker (BfN), Germany</i>
09.40	Existing international agreements on migratory bird conservation in the JWG Bird area <i>Nina Mikander (Ministry of the Environment), Finland</i>

10.20	Outcome of the HELCOM workshop on migratory waterbirds, Helsinki, November 2018 <i>Volker Dierschke (GaviaEco Research), Germany</i>
10.50 - 11.10	Break
Agenda Item 2	How to identify and map migration routes? <i>Moderation Janos Hennicke (BfN), Germany</i>
11.10	Speedupdate: Identification of routes and threats during migration in small Charadrius plovers – a novel approach using super light-weighted GPS tags in the Wadden Sea <i>Dominic Cimiotti (Michael-Otto-Institut im NABU), Germany</i>
11.30	Detecting the migration of birds using weather radar data <i>Ommo Hüppop, Arndt Wellbrock (Institute of Avian Research), Germany</i>
12.10	Bat migration over the Sea <i>Antje Seebens-Hoyer (NABU, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern), Germany</i>
12.40	Speedupdate: How to protect migration routes? <i>Sandra Vardeh (BfN), Germany</i>
13.00-14.00	BREAK
14.00	Tracking the migration of Caspian terns and Lesser Black-backed Gulls fuscus <i>Ulrik Lötberg (BirdLife International, Sweden)</i>
Agenda Item 3	Potential and actual threats to birds migrating over sea <i>Moderation Ommo Hüppop (Institute of Avian Research), Germany</i>
14.40	Assessment of collision risk for vulnerable bird species with offshore wind farms <i>Aonghais Cook (BTO) Scotland</i>
15.20	Bird migration over the sea: methods, space-time patterns and conflicts with offshore wind farms <i>Stefan Garthe & Phillipp Schwemmer (FTZ), Germany</i>
16.00-16.10	Break
16.10	Air space as habitat <i>Robb Diehl (US Geological Survey)</i>
17.00	End of Day 1
Thursday , 9 September 2021	
Agenda Item 4	TOR and workplan for a subgroup “Bird Migration” under JWG BIRD <i>Moderation Dieter Boedeker (BfN), Volker Dierschke (GaviaEco Research), both Germany, and Laura Kaikkonen (HELCOM Secretariat)</i>
09.00	Presentation of the draft TORs for the subgroup <i>Laura Kaikkonen (HELCOM Secretariat)</i>
09.30 - 12.30 (break at 10.30)	Discussion of the draft TORs and draft workplan (tasks) for the subgroup <i>WS was invited to suggest amendments to the drafts</i>
12.30-13.15	Break
13.15	Continued discussion
14.30	End of Workshop