Protection of wild fauna: conclusion of the 1995 Agreement on the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory waterbirds

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PURPOSE: the conclusion of an Agreement on the “Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds”.

LEGISLATIVE ACT: Council Decision on the conclusion on behalf of the European Community of the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.

BACKGROUND: the EU is a Contracting Party to the 1982 “Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals”, referred to as the Bonn Convention. This Convention provides for the conclusion of regional agreements which, for species with an unfavourable conservations status and which are listed in Appendix II to the Convention, should be concluded as soon as possible.

The waterbirds of the African-Eurasian flyways (listed in Appendix II of the Bonn Convention), are in need of urgent attention. In 1995, consensus was found and an “Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds” was approved. This Agreement cam into effect on 1 November 1999.

CONTENT: the purpose of this Council Decision is to approve, on behalf of the European Community, the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds.

Annex 1:

The geographical coverage of the Agreement is listed in Annex I to the Agreement and is referred to as the “Agreement Area”.

All Parties to the Agreement agree to take co-ordinated measures to maintain migratory waterbirds species in a favourable conservation status to restore them to such a status. In addition they agree to:

- Conserve migratory waterbirds and to give special attention to endangered species and those in an unfavourable conservation status.
- Accord strict protection measures for endangered migratory waterbird species.
- Ensure that any use of migratory waterbirds is based on best available knowledge of their ecology.
- Identify sites and habitats for migratory waterbirds occurring within their territory.
- Encourage the protection, management, rehabilitation and restoration of these sites.
- Co-ordinate efforts to ensure that a network of suitable habitats is maintained.
- Investigate problems posed by human activities.
- Co-operate in emergency situations requiring an international response.

- Prohibit the deliberate introduction of non-native waterbird species into the environment.

- Initiate and support research into the biology and ecology of migratory waterbirds.

- Develop and maintain programmes to raise awareness and understanding of migratory waterbird conservation issues.

- Exchange information and research results.

- Co-operate with a view to assisting each other in order to implement the Agreement – particularly in the field of research and monitoring.

Annex 3:

Annex 3 consists of an Action Plan, which the Parties agree to undertake in relation to priority species and issues. The headings of the Action Plan are: species conservation; habitat conservation; management of human activities; research and monitoring; education and information; and implementation.

Provisions are a spelt out regarding implementation and financing; the meeting of the Parties; the establishment and composition of a technical committee; the functions of the Secretariat; the Agreement's relations with other international bodies; the settlement of disputes; and reservations.

ENTRY INTO FORCE: The Agreement enters into force on the first day of the third month after at least 14 Range States or regional economic integration organisations (comprising at least seven from Africa and seven from Eurasia) have signed without reservation.

As soon as the Agreement enters into force, a certified copy will be transmitted by the Depository (the Netherlands) to the Secretariat of the United Nations.