COUNCIL OF EUROPE CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Standing Committee

31st meeting
Strasbourg, 29 November – 2 December 2011

BUDAPEST DECLARATION ON BIRD PROTECTION AND POWER LINES

Adopted by the Conference "Power lines and bird mortality in Europe"

(Budapest, Hungary, 13 April, 2011)

Secretariat Memorandum prepared by
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage

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Budapest Declaration on bird protection and power lines
Adopted by the Conference "Power lines and bird mortality in Europe"

(Budapest, Hungary, 13 April, 2011)

The Conference **"Power lines and bird mortality in Europe"** (the Conference) was co-organised by MME/BirdLife Hungary, the Ministry of Rural Development of Hungary and BirdLife Europe and was kindly hosted by MAVIR (the Hungarian Transmission System Operator Company Ltd.), as part of the official programme of the Hungarian EU Presidency in 2011. It was attended by 123 participants of 29 European and Central Asian countries, the European Commission, UNEP-AEWA, six energy and utility companies, experts, businesses and NGOs. Following the review of state of art of bird safety on power lines across Europe and taking stock of the progress achieved and future challenges in ensuring the implementation of the relevant international and national legislations by the parties and by sharing their national experiences, the participants of the Conference adopted the following Declaration:

We call on the European Institutions (Commission and Parliament) and national governments

- as they formulate, commit to, and pursue an ambitious set of climate, energy and biodiversity conservation targets and strategies to ***reconcile energy generation, transmission and distribution with the protection of wild birds*** *within and beyond protected areas;*
- to maintain high levels of implementation of the EU's environmental acquis including the Birds and the Habitats Directives and relevant international legislation[1] through the application at national or regional level of *effective legal, administrative, technical or other requisite measures for:* ***1) minimisation of the negative impacts of power lines on the natural environment and wild birds and 2) ensuring a system of general protection of wild birds as requested by the Birds Directive, and 3) ensuring that such measures are incorporated in the assessment of investment projects*** *such as the electricity 'Projects of European Interest'* that will be advanced through the follow-up of the EU's Energy Infrastructure Package.

We call on all interested parties to jointly undertake a programme of follow up actions leading to effective minimisation of the power line induced bird mortality across the European continent and beyond. Such actions are, for example:

I. Preparatory actions, to be implemented by the end of 2012

Action	Applies to
1. Set up **groups of experts on bird safety on power lines** in each country and at international level to review and consolidate the available technical standards for bird safety on power lines; to develop National and European programmes for prevention and mitigation of bird electrocution and collision; to facilitate exchange of technical, biological and managerial experience and support implementation of such programmes.	Governments : National (EU) National (non-EU) International Industry, NGOs
2. Develop and kick off an **internationally coordinated start-up programme** for knowledge transfer, including the maintenance of an international roster of experts and regular communication on technical and managerial issues; to collate and publish bird-electrocution and collision related literature; to develop internationally standardised monitoring protocols; to expedite a Pan-European movement towards improving bird safety on power lines, including research and development as well as communication projects and voluntary cooperation between industry, public administration, and civil society.	National (EU) National (non-EU) International
3. Support ongoing **exchange of experience between EU and non-EU countries** to reduce and eliminate bird electrocution and collision on power lines.	National (EU) National (non-EU)

[1] CMS (Bonn) Resolution 7.4 (2002) and Bern Recommendation 110 (2004) provide strong recognition and acceptance of the birds and power line problem and the availability of effective solutions.

II. Planning and standard verification actions, to be completed by the end of 2015

4. **Prioritise power lines** for mitigation in accordance to bird distribution data and in consultation with relevant governmental, industry, academic and NGO experts. **Set up a detailed mid-term strategy and an implementation plan for mitigation** measures.	National (EU) National (non-EU)
5. Develop and approve **national technical standards** and **catalogues of bird-safe power pole designs** (for new lines) and **mitigation measures** (for retrofitting existing lines) relevant for each country. **Promote these standards through formal training** of technical staff and sub-contractors and regular conferences.	National (EU) National (non-EU)

III. Ensure that bird losses are to be eliminated on new and fully reconstructed power lines from 2016 onward

6. Ensure that **new and fully reconstructed power line sections are safe for birds by design.**	National (EU) National (non-EU)

IV. Mitigation actions on existing power lines, to be completed by 2020

7. Ensure that **priority power lines** in term of bird conservation/distribution **and the most dangerous pole types in all lines** are retrofitted/**changed to bird-friendly lines and pole types.**	National (EU) National (non-EU)

V. Monitoring and reporting of progress

8. Promote and support financially an internationally standardised **monitoring of the impacts of power lines** on birds, including the necessary evaluation of the effectiveness of mitigation measures.	National (EU) National (non-EU) Industry
9. To **report every two years** (starting from 2012) the actual progress in the implementation of Resolution 110 of the Bern Convention and of this Declaration.	National (EU) National (non-EU)