

1. Request for information on Turtle Dove hunting, management of its habitat, monitoring and research

To be provided to the European Commission by **19 February 2024**

Please send it to Beatriz.Arroyo@uclm.es and carles.carboneras@csic.es with jeremie.crespin@ec.europa.eu and pascale.prick@ec.europa.eu in copy

If administrative decisions about hunting or conservation are taken at a regional level (e.g. regional level), please provide the relevant information per region. (i.e. fill in one questionnaire per region)

Member State:	Cyprus
Region (if relevant):	
1. Hunting	
Hunting season (from/till) in 2023	3/9/2023 – 24/9/2023
1.1. Hunting regulations as published in official bulletins	
Legal hunting days	22
Daily quota per hunter	6 birds
Other relevant regulations	Season quota: 12 birds per hunter
1.2. Outcome	
Total turtle doves hunted in the MS/region in 2023 (please include uncertainty about the estimate when relevant)	13699
Method for estimating national bag	Application with mandatory reporting
Was there a mandatory bag data reporting system or a voluntary system?	Yes, reporting was mandatory via phone Application where every hunter must report harvest immediately.
1.3. Compliance and control mechanisms	
Number of inspections carried out in turtle dove hunting areas during the turtle dove hunting season (or the time when hunting season would normally take place, in the case of countries with temporary moratoriums)	More than 300 patrols consisting of 2 wardens were conducted during the period that the season was open

	Number of inspections carried out in turtle dove hunting areas outside the turtle dove hunting season	More than 1500
	Spatial distribution of those inspections within the country/regions	During the Turtle dove hunting season, the majority of the inspections were carried out within the area that hunting for the species is allowed. This is only 4.6% of the total available area in which the Republic of Cyprus exercises effective control.
	Outcome of those inspections (number of infringements found, type of infringements) (please differentiate during and outside the hunting season)	600 infringements were reported in 2023; 28 of those were reported during the Turtle Dove hunting season.
	Consequences for offenders (enforcement and sanctions)	Any violation of the legislation is a criminal offence. The legislation is very strict with fines, starting from 2000 euros (exception for the offences involving training of hunting dogs. fines related to hunting dog training start from 300 euros) on spot and can increase to thousands of euros depending on the severity and the number of offences. Since the implementation of new legislation in 2017, poaching has been noticeably reduced. Fines are given on the spot and violators have 30 days to pay the amount and if they fail to do so, an increase of 50% on the initial penalty is added up, and then the violator has 15 more days to pay it off. Furthermore, for every offence the offender gets penalty points. For repeating violations, hunting rights can be revoked for someone that has obtained 5 penalty points. In addition, all the means of hunting are seized until the fine is paid. In case he doesn't, the violator is taken to court. At the court apart from the financial fine (up to 20000 for each offence), imprisonment can be added to the penalty, as well as seizure of all hunting means and also revoke his right to obtain a hunting privilege in the future.
	If daily quotas are in place, estimation of the proportion of hunters exceeding the daily quota (please also specify assessment method and associated uncertainty)	From patrol inspections, no violation of quota was detected.

	Any other applied compliance promotion mechanism (e.g. public information campaigns)	Informing the public through public and social media
2. Habitat management carried out in 2023		
	Description of initiatives implemented, (restoration measures, maintenance measures, Agrienvironment measures, contribution of hunters to habitat management, measures targeting turtle dove) including spatial scope,	<p>Habitat management measures for wildlife and especially for game species is practiced for many years in Cyprus. Main actions include food plots with cereal and legumes, cleaning of water springs and installation of waterers. Apart from that, in the new Common Agricultural Policy (2021 - 2027) the following actions will be proposed to be implement for improving the conditions not only for T. Doves but other species as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional funding for small scale traditional goat and sheep husbandry in Natura 2000 areas, especially in higher elevation where land abandonment has been more severe and vegetation has become extremely thick, negatively affecting the species. This will create more open spaces and create better habitat for Turtle Doves. • Use of herbicides/insecticides in all Natura 2000 areas will be prohibited (exception for some plantations that is absolutely necessary). Outside Natura 2000 areas, removal of unwanted herbaceous vegetation by mechanical means for certain plantations including vineyards, carob and olive plantations and not chemical, will be funded. • Early harvest of cereal plantations in Natura 2000 areas will be prohibited (no silage harvest), until after the are fully mature. Dates for harvesting cereal crops will be set. Outside Natura 2000 areas, a scheme will be proposed, where a farmer can voluntarily leave 20% of the cereal crop unharvest until the end of the summer, in return for extra funding. • Within Natura 2000 areas, no one will be allowed to alternate, remove, cut, prune or damage any kind of riparian vegetation. Offenders will be subject to 2000 fine on spot. • Within Natura 2000 areas, any non-cultivated trees or shrub species that can be used for nesting by T. Doves will be protected.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Natura 2000 areas a floating raft must be installed in every open water reservoir so birds can utilize it for drinking and thus reducing the chances of drowning. <p>Hunter contribution to habitat management has been practiced for a long time in Cyprus. Installation of waterers, cleaning of natural springs and planting of cereal and legumes for wildlife are the main actions and efforts of most of the organised hunting clubs in the island. There is a big difference in the amount and effort for habitat improvement measures carried out by the hunters of different Districts. Potentially, different harvest quota will be set for each District with harvest being higher for the Districts that make extra efforts for habitat improvement compared to those who don't.</p>
	Funding of those initiatives (including in the context of Common Agricultural Policy)	Hunting licenses, Government contribution. These mainly come through the CAP (Common Agricultural Policy), the Budget of the Game & Fauna Service (Ministry of the Interior) and the private initiatives of Hunting clubs through the Cyprus Hunting Federation & Wildlife Conservation.
	Monitoring carried out to assess effects – please describe monitoring method as well as results	
3. Research programs (mark all that apply and provide details)		
	National survey or census carried out in 2023	Summer population surveys are carried out every year in July - August
	National survey census planned for 2024	Summer population surveys will be carried out like every year in July - August
	Ringling Capture Mark Recapture programs to estimate survival (where, since when, number of birds marked, etc.)	Satellite transmitters were fitted on 8 birds to study migration routes and survival. All birds that were tagged were ringed as well. None of the tagged birds have fled into any MS. Half of the birds stayed in Turkey for breeding and the rest flow from Turkey to Ukraine through the Black Sea.

	Monitoring of productivity (method used, spatial and temporal scale, results available)	Estimation of age of hunted birds from wing clippings. From analysing 220 wing clippings, 37.7% were from adult birds and 62.3% from Juveniles.
	Monitoring of hunting bags (e.g. piloting of electronic systems for real time data)	Both, but mainly relying on reporting through the application
	Quantification of illegal killing	
	Any other research programs	Satellite transmitters were fitted on 8 birds to study migration routes and survival. None of the tagged birds have fled into any MS. Half of the birds stayed in Turkey for breeding and the rest flow from Turkey to Ukraine through the Black Sea.