

VKM assessment:

Non-detriment finding for the Cinereous Vulture

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Scientific name: *Aegypius monachus* (Linnaeus, 1776)

Common name (s): Cinereous Vulture, Eurasian black vulture, European Black vulture

Norwegian name: Munkegribb

Type of permit: CITES Appendix II

Purpose and source: The proposal concerns the export of one individual from Norway to Spain. The source is W- specimen taken from the wild, and the purpose is B- breeding in captivity.

VKM has adopted the definition of detriment, jf. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) suggested by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Scientific Authority (<https://www.fws.gov/international/pdf/archive/workshop-american-ginseng-cites-non-detriment-findings.pdf>):

1. Harvest that is not sustainable.
2. Harvest that harms the status of the species in the wild.
3. Removal from the wild that results in habitat loss or destruction, or that interferes with recovery efforts for a species.

Conclusion:

The bird is part of a Spanish reintroduction project and has had an accident in Norway (collision in a wind farm). It has had surgery in Norway and is now returning to Spain to participate in the captive breeding program for this species.

VKM finds that the proposed export of one Cinereous Vulture to Spain is **going to be non-detrimental** to the survival of the species in the wild.

Species background

A. monachus is distributed from Iberia and Southeast France, Balearic Islands and Balkans East through Turkey, Caucasus, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and possibly Southwest Kashmir to South Siberia, Mongolia and Northeast China. Winter habitat in the Middle East, South Pakistan, North India, Nepal and in very small numbers in Eastern China and Korea (Meyburg et al., 2020).

The species can be either migratory or resident depending on the geographic origin. For example, in southern Europe, the adults are non-migratory, whereas in Central Asia they are semi-resident. In central Spain, juveniles tend to remain close to main breeding areas, but with occasional dispersal to northern Spain in spring and summer (Meyburg et al., 2020). Habitat is forested hills and mountains. At 300-1400 m altitude in Spain, higher in Asia (Meyburg et al., 2020). The species feeds on carrion, and rarely takes live prey. It forages over forested areas, but also over many kinds of open terrain, from steppe to upland grasslands (BirdLife International, 2018)).

The Cinereous Vulture has the longest breeding period of all raptors in Europe (Andevski et al., 2017a). It lays eggs between February and April and tends to congregate in very loose colonies or nuclei. Clutch size is most commonly one egg, very rarely two, with an incubation time of 50-62 days (Meyburg et al., 2020). Not much is known about breeding parameters across its entire breeding range. Numbers from Spain (in 2006) show an overall productivity (number of chicks reared/total observed pairs) of 0.60 and a breeding success (number of chicks reared/pairs starting incubation) of 0.68 (de la Puente et al., 2007 cited in Andevski et al., 2017a). These values could be considered sustainable for maintaining a positive population trend, if there are no serious threats such as poisoning, shooting or electrocution regionally (Moreno-Opo and Margalida, 2014, cited in Andevski et al., 2017a). Currently, the main threats to this species are illegal use of poison, collision with and electrocution caused by energy infrastructures such as cables and wind farms, and food shortage (Andevski et al., 2017a).

Population size is estimated to between 15,600 and 21,000 mature individuals globally (Birdlife International, 2018). The European population is estimated to consist of between 5,600 and 6,000 mature individuals (BirdLife International, 2015).

Globally, *A. Monachus* was categorized as "Near Threatened C1 ver.3.1" by the IUCN Red List in 2018. Global population trend is anticipated to be decreasing. The reason for this status is that the species appears to be suffering an ongoing decline in its Asiatic strongholds (Birdlife International, 2018). The European population is categorized as "Least Concern ver.3.1" in 2015, as the population in Europe appears to be increasing and has a very large range (BirdLife International, 2015). The increase in the European population (especially in

the western part) is mostly due to the increase of the Spanish population. The population in the eastern part has a stable or negative trend (Andevski et al., 2017a).

In 1979, *A. monachus* was included in CITES Appendix II, as a part of the listing of Falconiformes spp. In 1997, it was listed in Annex A of the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations.

A. monachus has been included in Appendix II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) since 1979.

The species is listed in Annex I of the European Commission Birds Directive and in Appendix II of the Bern Convention.

There are few records of this species registered in the CITES trade database in the time period between 2010 and 2019. It appears to be very little international trade in Cinereous Vultures, with the majority of the trade records registered in the CITES trade database is for purposes Q- circus or travelling exhibition, B- breeding in captivity and Z- zoo ([CITES trade database](#)).

Additional remarks

The EU has developed a European Species Action Plan for the Conservation of the Cinereous Vulture - (2018 – 2028), with the main goal of restoring the species' population to its original distribution range and to maintain the current population's favorable conservation status (Andevski et al., 2017a). The EU-action plan framework is mostly the same as the global action plan for the species, the Flyway Action Plan for the Cinereous Vulture (Andevski et al., 2017b). The species is legally protected in all range states covered by the EU-Action plan (Andevski et al., 2017a)

Reintroduction projects in Europe includes Spain (Mallorca, Bulgos, Catalonia), France and Bulgaria (Andevski et al., 2017a).

The particular individual concerned by this export-proposal is part of the reintroduction programme in Spain, which is run by GREFA (Grupo de Rehabilitación de la Fauna Autóctona y su Hábitat) (Andevski et al., 2017a)

There is also a Cinereous Vulture Captive Breeding Programme which is a coordinated breeding network of zoos and animal parks under the umbrella of EAZA, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria and hosted by Planckendael Zoo in Belgium (Andevski et al., 2017a). Breeding a Cinereous Vulture in captivity is challenging, as breeding pairs need to have a very strong pair bond and the species is very sensitive to disturbance. Breeding success in captivity is very low, but to date 55 chicks have been released in Spain and in France (Andevski et al., 2017a).

References

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