

**PROPOSAL FOR INCLUSION OF SPECIES ON THE APPENDICES OF THE
CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY SPECIES OF
WILD ANIMALS**



A. PROPOSAL: Inclusion of Peruvian Tern, *Sterna lorata*, Philippi and Lanbeck 1861 on Appendix I of CMS

B. PROPONENT: Government of Peru

C. SUPPORTING STATEMENT:

1. Taxon

1.1 Classis	Birds
1.2 Ordo	Charadriiformes
1.3 Familia	Laridae
1.4 Species	<i>Sterna lorata</i> , Philippi and Landbeck, 1861
1.5 Common name(s)	English: Peruvian Tern Spanish: Gaviotín chico

2. Biological data

2.1 Distribution

Species restricted to the Humboldt Current zone along the south-eastern coasts of the East Pacific: Ecuador, Peru and Chile. Its actual range extends from the Manglares de Vice in northern Peru to the Mejillones Peninsula in northern Chile. Its movements and wanderings are poorly known, but the species has been recorded as far as northern Ecuador. There are currently three known breeding sites in Peru and nine in Chile (the latter are all located on the Mejillones Peninsula). Current numbers are estimated at 150 to 160 pairs in this distribution range, with breeding apparently taking place only in some parts of this extensive coastline that covers approximately 200,000 km².

2.2 Population

Recent population estimates record between 1,000 and 2,500 birds, with numbers in decline. Some reports suggest that the population may have declined by 50 % in the last 10 years. Currently, there are three known breeding sites in Peru and nine in Chile (the latter are all located on the Mejillones Peninsula). The breeding population is currently estimated at no

more than 150 to 160 pairs. Current numbers at all sites are estimated at 950-1,000 birds, against historical estimates of over 5,000 pairs (10,000 individuals).

2.3 Habitat

Coastal species that breeds and rests on sandy beaches and dunes up to 100-200 m from the high tide mark; tends to be associated with wetlands or desert plains some 1-3 km inland.

2.4 Migrations

There is no real information; the distribution range is known, without knowing whether the species is partially or completely migratory or wanders nomadically up and down the coasts of the three countries. There are suggestions that the species may move north to Ecuador in winter. Flocks of up to 70 individuals have been sighted up to 200 km out to sea during El Niño years.

3. **Threat data**

3.1 Direct threats to the population

The principal direct threat to the species is disturbance in its breeding grounds. This is mainly caused by the presence of bathers on the beach in summer (egg-laying happens between August and February) and building of seaside resorts and summer homes, fishing coves or port and industry facilities along the coast (such is the case of Mejillones in Chile). Races of sand motorbikes and 4x4 vehicles also have a direct impact as they cut across beaches and dunes. Presumed predators are birds such as *Cacara plancus* and *Falco peregrinus*, and mammal such as foxes (*Pseudalopex spp.*) and stray dogs.

3.2 Habitat destruction

For the reasons mentioned in 3.1, the habitat is being - or has been - changed and degraded either temporarily or permanently. One notable consequence has been the loss of eggs through nest desertion or destruction.

3.3 Indirect threat

It has been suggested – without supporting data – that the species may suffer from the competition from commercial fishing since the overfishing of pelagic species during the 1970s in Chile and Peru, and from the pollution of estuaries (consequence of mining activities in most mining areas in northern Chile). The loud noise and intense activities of surrounding industrial zones, the noise of planes and helicopters, the noise of nearby detonations, vehicle traffic and the proximity of people are disruptive.

3.4 Threats connected especially with migration

Little is known about the movements or migration of this species. We know that the species disappears between April and July each year, when it is believed to spend more time out on sea, i.e. it moves out to sea. Birds that frequent polluted estuaries and coastal areas may

become intoxicated or contract diseases, especially on the mouths of rivers known to evacuate untreated or mining waste.

3.5 National and international utilization

None.

4. **Protection status and needs**

4.1 National protection status

In Chile, CONAMA (2006) has recognized the species as threatened with extinction. In Peru it is classified as “vulnerable” by Supreme Decree (INRENA, 2004).

4.2 International protection status

Coastal species of the gull family which, based on its current population status and trend, has been classified as ENDANGERED (EN C2a(i)) by IUCN; i.e. its population size is estimated to number fewer than 2,500 mature individuals and a continuing decline observed, projected or inferred.

4.3 Additional protection needs

National policies for coastal protected area management are required, especially in those coastal areas where the species and other birds breed and rest. Coastal management plans should stem urban growth and the building of port and warehousing facilities.

5. **Range States¹**

CHILE, ECUADOR, PERU.

6. **Comments from Range States**

The three countries are Parties to the CMS and are in a position to carry out joint studies by way of concrete, concerted action in support of the conservation of the species.

7. **Additional remarks**

¹CMS Parties in capitals.

8. References

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