

# **Ornis Committee Meeting**

**Wednesday, 2nd August 2023,**

**Time at 1600 at 116,**

**Triq l-Arcisqof Pietru Pace, Victoria, Gozo**

**Location WBRU Office GOZO**

## **Minutes**

### **Participants:**

Dr. Joseph Grech – Chairman

Mr. Jean Paul Portelli – Secretary

Mr. Nicholas Barbara – BirdLife Malta

Mr Anthony Caruana – Member nominated by Government

Mr Mark Gauci – Avifauna expert

Mr. Joseph Grech – Member nominated by Government

Mr Joe Perici Calascione – FKNK

Perit Andrew Psaila – FKNK

Mr.Lucas. Micallef- FKNK

Dr. Gaynor Saliba – Member nominated by Government

Mr.Darrin Stevens – Representative of the Environment and Resources Authority

Mr. Mark Sultana – BirdLife Malta

### **Absent**

Nill

1. **Approval of the agenda.**

	In favour	Against	Abstention
<b>FKNK</b>	1		
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>	1		
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>	1		
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>	1		
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>	1		
<b>ERA</b>	1		
<b>Chairman</b>			
<b>Total</b>	7		

2. **Approval of the minutes of the previous meeting held in May 2023.**

*Draft minutes circulated in advance of this meeting.*

	In favour	Against	Abstention
<b>FKNK</b>			
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>			
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>			
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>			
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>			
<b>ERA</b>			
<b>Chairman</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

3. **Matters arising and matters to report.**

4. **Taxidermy collections.**

FKNK's proposal submitted in conjunction with the Malta Taxidermy Federation (*Doc Item 5*). *Item discussed during workshops. Discussion .*

4.1 On taxidermy, the Chairman notes that the proposal was put forward by FKNK and the Malta Taxidermy Federation. The members note that a working group was held on 24 July 2023 and minutes thereof were distributed to all members on 1 August 2023.

4.2 Mr Lucas Micallef stated that FKNK's proposal relates to the methodology.

- 4.3 Mr Darrin Stevens (ERA) referred to the minutes distributed and referred to point 4 thereof. He also referred to the working group wherein Mr Richard Lia had referred to 32 species which never had a gun shot.
- 4.4 The list is available to WBRU and the secretary committed to obtain the same list from Mr Lia.
- 4.5 Mr. Mark Sultana (BLM), therefore asked for further explanations on these 32 species from WBRU.
- 4.6 The Chair requested that these concerns be sent via mail to WBRU so that Mr Richard Lia addresses them in the context of the presentation, which he will be required to deliver on the matter.
- 4.7 Mr Stevens suggested that the minutes of the working group should be considered as minutes.
- 4.8 The Chair stated that the minutes should be considered as internal notes which should be kept between members as guidelines, however any amendments thereto should be sent to the Secretary.

5. **Salvage permit/road kill.**

Proposal submitted by MTF (Doc Item 7). Item brought forward from previous meeting. Discussion

6. **EURING - Birdlife Malta Monopoly.**

Proposal submitted by FKNK (Doc Item 8). Proposed legal amendment (Doc Item 7.4)

- 6.1 The topic regarding Euring was drafted by the Secretary and circulated to the Committee as a basis for discussion.
- 6.2 Mr Joe Perici Calascone (FKNK) stated that FKNK's position on the matter is already known.
- 6.3 Mr Mark Sultana (BLM) asked whether there is a proposed amendment to the legislation and whether WBRU will be given parameters as to how to amend the law. Nobody gave an answer
- 6.4 Mr Mark Gauci asked a legal question regarding the issue of monopoly regarding the EURING. In the same manner, any entity could challenge the formation of the Ornithology Committee.
- 6.5 The Chair stated that the members of the Ornithology Committee are appointed by law and any person may put forward an amendment thereto to the same Committee.
- 6.6 On amendments, FKNK referred to document 7.4 distributed to the members prior to the meeting.
- 6.7 Mr Stevens referred to the wording 'or from any other university-affiliated as there might be other accredited organizations.
- 6.8 Mr Mark Sultana (BLM) stated that if any person/entity wished to start a bird-ringing scheme it should be affiliated itself with a university or a recognised scientific body

- 6.7 Mr Joe Perici Calascone (FKNK) stated that there are other advanced research institutions which are not a university.
- 6.8 Mark Sultana reminded committee that of the reason is to remove a monopoly, than we should be careful we do not create a ‘free for all’ situation. If the law states that anyone can have a bird ringing scheme as long as it is affiliated with a University or a recognised scientific body then the monopoly is removed. Mark still pointed out that with the recent changes in law where hunting and trapping licence holders can still apply for a ringing licence the issue of monopoly is debatable.
- 6.8 The Chair suggested that since the Ornis is a consultative committee, we should take a vote in principle and subsequently it would be up to the legislator to consider the appropriate wording.
- 6.9 Mr Mark Gauci (BLM) asked to take a vote in principle and subsequently asks WBRU to amend the legislation accordingly.
- 6.10 The Chairman suggested the following wording: ‘or any other accredited institution designated for such purposes.’
- 6.11 The vote taken was:” Do you agree with removing the monopoly on bird ringing from the legislation?” Everyone voted in favour except BLM, which abstained. BLM stated that it has abstained since it did not agree that there is presently a monopoly.
- 6.12 Mr Darrin Stevens suggested that WBRU are to set the criteria since they are designated by law to do so.
- 6.13 A vote was taken. All members were in favor. Birdlife Malta abstained.
- 6.

*Item brought forward from previous meeting. Item subject to a vote.*

	<b>In favour</b>	<b>Against</b>	<b>Abstention</b>
<b>FKNK</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>			<b>1</b>
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>ERA</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>		<b>1</b>

**7. Proposed new Schedule XI – internal ring sizes.**

Documents circulated in advance of the meeting (Doc Items 7.5A – 7.5C).

Item to be discussed after review of internal ring sizes by CITES Office and feedback from ERA. (Item subject to a vote)

**postponed until documents are received.**

	In favour	Against	Abstention
<b>FKNK</b>			
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>			
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>			
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>			
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>			
<b>ERA</b>			
<b>Chairman</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

8. **Article 9(1)(b) research derogation. Satellite-tagging of Golden Plovers and Song Thrushes: outcome of the 29 Nov 2022 – 31 Mar 2023 satellite-tagging period and proposed renewal for period 20 Oct 2023 – 31 March 2024.**  
*Item subject to a vote.*

A vote was taken. All members voted in favour

	In favour	Against	Abstention
<b>FKNK</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>ERA</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		

9. Culling of Feral Pigeons and Starlings issued in December 2022 will soon be expiring (30<sup>th</sup> June 2023), renew said license to cover the period 2023/2024. (subject to vote )

A vote is taken. All members voted in favour. BLM emphasized that the culling is only a measure of last resort.

	In favour	Against	Abstention
<b>FKNK</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>BirdLife Malta</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Mr Anthony Caruana</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Mr Joseph Grech (not the chairman)</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Dr Gaynor Saliba</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>ERA</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Chairman</b>	<b>1</b>		
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>		

10. **Any other Business**

The date of next meeting is provisionally scheduled to 20 September 2023 at 16.30.

***NB: All items marked as “subject to a vote” may also be subject to sub-votes.***