



**26<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**  
**30<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

5 – 8 May 2026, Bonn, Germany

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**SOLAR POWER PLANTS AND BAT POPULATIONS**

*(Prepared by the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee)*

Summary:

This document presents a proposed new Resolution on potential impact of solar power plants on bat populations, prepared by the Intersessional Working Group on Potential Impact of Solar Power Plants with the assistance of the Secretariat.

Background

The Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on the Potential Impact of Solar Power Plants was proposed at the 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee (AC27), held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and was subsequently established in 2023. The establishment of the IWG responded to the limited availability of research on the impacts of solar power plants on bats, as well as to the projected large-scale expansion of solar energy across Europe.

The initial objectives of the IWG were to:

- collate relevant literature on solar power plants and bats;
- assess the scale of solar power plant development across the Agreement area;
- prepare a summary report on existing knowledge and projected developments.

At AC29, held in November 2025, the results of the literature review on the potential effects of solar power plants on bats were presented. This included a categorisation of the principal impacts on bats and insects, as well as broader considerations regarding the effects of obstacles and smooth surfaces on bat behaviour. A draft resolution was also presented with a view to raising awareness of issues related to solar power plant development. As part of this draft resolution, the IWG proposes to develop appropriate guidelines on solar power plants and bats.

Recommended actions during the joint 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Standing Committee and the 30<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Advisory Committee:

The Standing Committee and the Advisory Committee are invited to discuss the draft Resolution on Potential Impact of Solar Power Plants on Bat Populations, contained in the Annex of this document, and suggest further amendments, if appropriate.

**ANNEX**

Draft Resolution 10.X

Solar Power Plants and Bat Populations

*The Meeting of Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats (hereafter "the Agreement"),*

*Noting* the importance of solar energy on the implementation of the Paris Agreement, the European Green Deal, and the EU Directive 2023/2413 (RED III) on the promotion of energy from renewable sources, including its provisions on Renewable Acceleration Areas, to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the context of combating climate change, and thereby contributing to the protection of species from the potentially negative impacts of climate change;

*Recalling* Resolution 2.2 on Consistent Monitoring Methodologies, which recommends the adoption of consistent monitoring methods for bats across Europe;

*Recalling* Resolution 7.8 on Conservation and Management of Critical Feeding Areas, Core Areas around Colonies and Commuting Routes, which raises awareness of the importance of critical feeding areas, core areas around known colonies and commuting routes for bats;

*Recalling* Resolution 8.3 on Monitoring of Daily and Seasonal Movements of Bats, which notes inadequate information on many species and the necessity to determine possible commuting routes, migration corridors and stopover sites;

*Recalling* Resolution 8.10 on Recommended Experience and Skills of Experts with regard to Quality of Assessments, which encourages the use of qualified bat specialists in solar plant Environmental Impact Assessments;

*Recalling* Resolution 8.13 on Insect Decline as a Threat to Bat Populations in Europe, which raises concern about the published evidence of dramatic loss of insect biomass in open land and notes the adverse decline of insect diversity and abundance;

*Recalling* Resolution 9.5 on Support to Authorities Dealing with Bat Assessment Reports, which highlights the need for high-quality impact assessments and expert review;

*Noting* the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), which encourages co-operative and cross-boundary research;

*Noting* the Directive No. 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, and the Directive No. 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, both of which state that the scope of information required for the purposes of impact assessments should be consistent with the current state of knowledge and methods of such assessments;

*Noting* the RePowerEU Plan, which promotes the acceleration of the green transition and massive investment in renewable energy, including solar energy;

*Recognising* that solar power installations occur in a variety of forms, including ground-mounted systems (such as agrivoltaics and forest-based solar parks), floating photovoltaics, rooftop and building-integrated panels, canopy or car-park structures, and concentrated solar facilities, and that these different types may have distinct impacts on bats, requiring different planning considerations and appropriately tailored assessment and mitigation;

*Noting* the increasing body of scientific evidence that ground-mounted solar developments can reduce bat activity and alter habitat use, as demonstrated in recent studies;

*Noting* the rapid development of solar energy facilities;

*Recognising* that solar installations require additional infrastructure e.g. access roads, perimeter fencing, battery storage systems, transformers and invertors that may affect bat activity. In particular, transformers and invertors introduce continuous low-level ultrasonic noise potentially interfering with bat echolocation;

*Taking into account* the cumulative environmental impacts of the expanding renewable energy facilities, including the increasing number and scale of solar power plants and their interrelation with wind farms and linear infrastructure such as roads, potentially leading to landscape fragmentation and barrier effects for bat populations;

*Recognising* the importance of harmonised and standardised monitoring methods and analysis to produce effective avoidance and mitigation measures;

*Recognising* the absence of a widely agreed definition or standardised approach to ecovoltaic or biodiversity-friendly solar installations;

*Calls* on Parties, non-Party Range States and other stakeholders, including non-governmental organisations, to:

1. Take into account the impacts that solar power plants may have on bat populations at different geographical scales;
2. Encourage prioritisation of solar power plant development on already degraded land, such as but not limited to brownfields, quarries, areas along existing linear infrastructure corridors, on artificial surfaces like rooftops or car park canopies, to minimise additional natural habitat loss;
3. Raise awareness and take into account that some habitats and areas, where a negative impact on bats is possible, may not be suitable for the development of solar power plants;
4. **Recognise** the need to assess the impacts of solar power plants development on bat populations as part of the environmental assessment procedure;
5. Encourage research on the development of appropriate methods for assessing, avoiding and mitigating impacts;
6. Encourage Parties, non-Party Range States and relevant stakeholders to work towards the development of criteria for ecovoltaic and/or biodiversity-friendly solar installations;
7. Promote continued dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders on

the impacts of solar energy development on bat populations;

8. Promote rigorous post-construction monitoring and evaluate the effectiveness of avoidance, mitigation, and compensation measures using standardised EUROBATS-compliant methods;
9. Encourage developers of solar energy projects and responsible authorities to make reports from impact assessments and post-construction monitoring publicly available.

*Requests* the Advisory Committee to:

1. Continue to compile relevant literature on the impacts of solar power plants on bats, including methods to assess the impact of solar power plants on bat populations;
2. Assess the scale of development of solar power plants across EUROBATS Range States;
3. Develop appropriate guidelines on Solar Power Plants and Bats.

*Instructs* the Secretariat to publish the literature review and circulate it to all Parties.