



10th SESSION OF THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES

10 – 13 November 2026, Valletta, Malta

CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF IMPORTANT UNDERGROUND SITES FOR BATS

(Prepared by the Secretariat and the Advisory Committee)

Summary:

This document proposes amendments to Resolution 7.6: Conservation and Management of Important Underground Sites for Bats.

Background

The Intersessional Working Group (IWG) on Conservation and Management of Important Underground Sites for Bats was re-convened at AC27 in recognition of the fact that, although numerous conservation interventions have been implemented at underground sites, information on their effectiveness remains limited, fragmented and not systematically collected or standardised. In particular, documented examples of unsuccessful or detrimental measures are scarce, despite their importance for avoiding negative impacts on bats.

To address this gap, the IWG developed and circulated an online questionnaire to Parties and Non-Party Range States to gather evidence-based information on conservation measures at important underground sites for bats. These measures include both direct interventions (such as grilles, gates and fences) and indirect measures (such as warning boards and CCTV systems). The questionnaire was designed to capture both successful practices and those that proved ineffective or had unintended negative consequences.

To date, more than 50 examples from 15 countries have been collected, demonstrating strong engagement across the range while also highlighting the need for continued outreach and data collection.

The reference to the datasheet included in the previous version of the Resolution has been removed, since the only currently available format for updating the database is an MS Access file provided by the Secretariat.

The present draft was discussed and finalised during the plenary session of the joint meeting of the Advisory Committee and Standing Committee, held in Bonn, Germany, from 5 to 8 May 2026.

Recommended actions

The Meeting of the Parties is recommended to:

adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 7.6: Conservation and Management of Important Underground Sites for Bats, contained in Annex to this document.

ANNEX

Proposed amendments to Resolution 7.6:
Conservation and Management of Important Underground Sites for Bats

NB: Proposed new text is underlined. Text to be deleted is ~~crossed-out~~. Changes to the order and numbering of paragraphs are not indicated.

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

Recalling Resolution No. 2.4, Element 2: Bat Habitats, Underground Habitats agreed at its Second Session (Bonn, July 1998);

Further recalling Resolution No. 3.8: Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan agreed at its Third Session (Bristol, July 2000);

Recognising the importance of underground habitats to many species of bats, both for hibernation and breeding in different parts of their ranges;

Recognising that underground habitats, including man-made habitats, are threatened by a wide variety of anthropogenic factors and that active management of such sites is often required;

Recognising that evidence for the effects of interventions on bat conservation is limited and not easily available;

Noting further the work being carried out in the framework of the EU Habitats Directive, in particular the establishment of the Natura 2000 network, and in the framework of the Bern Convention, in particular the establishment of the Emerald network;

Confirms the importance of the EUROBATS list of underground habitats as a contribution to the maintenance of populations of European bats;

Endorses the revised guidance on site selection prepared by the Advisory Committee ([Doc.EUROBATS.MoP7.22.Rev.1](#));

Strongly encourages Parties and Range States that have not yet identified their most important underground habitats to do so, using the updated guidance referred to above;

Encourages Parties and Non-Party Range States that have not yet done so ~~For sites that are already listed, encourages Parties and Range States that have not yet done so,~~ to submit, for sites already listed, updated counts of bats at each site, being representing the seasonal maximum count over the preceding eight-year period. Updates should be submitted to the Secretariat within one year of the MoP using a data format provided by the Secretariat (~~Annex 1*~~);

Urges Parties and encourages Range States to:

1. Submit updated information about each site before every second MoP (an eight-year cycle, with the next revisions due before MoP 9), using a data format provided by the Secretariat (~~Annex 1*~~);
2. Ensure that the important underground habitats they have identified are fully protected by law and, where appropriate, are physically protected against unauthorised entry;
3. Ensure that such habitats are managed in accordance with advice published by the Advisory Committee;
4. Inform the Secretariat of listed sites that have been damaged or destroyed and the reasons for this loss;
5. Provide information on evidence-based bat conservation measures for underground and ground-covered structures that have been adopted by bats as roosts, in accordance with the agreed format (Annex 1).

Requests the Advisory Committee to:

1. Continue to review the practices in evidence-based bat conservation measures for underground and ground-covered structures;
2. Keep the review document updated and available for the public;
3. Continue to collate relevant information.

Instructs the Secretariat to:

1. Investigate cases of loss or damage to listed sites that are brought to its attention, initially by correspondence with the Party involved. Such investigations should be reported by the Secretariat at each MoP;
2. Make selected examples of evidence-based bat conservation measures available on the EUROBATS website.

~~to investigate ways of making the site data more accessible and useful whilst respecting the confidentiality of detailed site information;~~

Repeals Resolution 4.3.

ANNEX 1

Questionnaire on **BAT CONSERVATION PRACTICES UNDERGROUND**

1. Name, Surname:
2. Position / Job title:
3. Organization / Institution:
4. Country:
5. Email:
6. Mark in **Bold** your choice about your personal details:
 - Personal details hidden / anonymous
 - Personal details public
 - Other choice (please specify):
7. Mark in **Bold** the example you are providing:
 - Best practice case / positive example of bat conservation
 - Unsuccessful measure / bad example of bat conservation
 - Other type of example (please specify):
8. Name of the underground site (local and English, if the latter exists):
9. Mark in **Bold** the site type:
 - Cave
 - Mine
 - Cellar
 - Water tunnel
 - Bunker
 - Railway tunnel
 - Other type (please specify):
10. Site location (country, county, locality, protected area, or any information about location). Exact coordinates are not needed:
11. Mark in **Bold** one or several periods when bats are using the roost:
 - All year round
 - In winter / for hibernation
 - In spring / for transit
 - In summer / as nursery
 - In summer / not reproducing
 - In autumn / as swarming site
 - In autumn / for transit
 - Other use of roost (please specify):
12. Mark in **Bold** the legal protection status of the site:

- Legally protected
- Not protected by law

13. Briefly describe the legal protection status of the site (ex. inside or outside protected areas, privately owned, etc.) or the reasons for the absence of legal protection:

14. Mark in **Bold** one or several conservation measures implemented at the site:

- Gate
- Grille
- Fence
- Warning board
- Video camera
- Other measure (please specify):

15. Year (or exact date) of implementing conservation measure:

16. Mark in **Bold** one or several bat species targeted by the conservation measures. If not listed, write the species name(s) in the "Other species" line:

- *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*
- *Rhinolophus hipposideros*
- *Rhinolophus euryale*
- *Rhinolophus blasii*
- *Rhinolophus mehelyi*
- *Miniopterus schreibersii*
- *Miniopterus pallidus*
 - *Myotis myotis*
 - *Myotis blythii*
 - *Myotis capaccinii*
 - *Myotis emarginatus*
 - *Myotis dasycneme*
 - *Myotis daubentonii*
 - *Myotis bechsteinii*
- *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
- *Barbastella barbastellus*
- *Nyctalus noctula*
- *Eptesicus serotinus*
- *Eptesicus nilssonii*
- *Plecotus auritus*
- *Plecotus austriacus*
- Other species:.....
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17. Please describe in detail the parameters of the conservation measure (ex. gate details):
18. Please describe the situation **BEFORE** implementing conservation measures (bat numbers, species, threats, monitoring details, etc.):
19. Please describe the situation **AFTER** implementing conservation measures (bat numbers, species, threats resolved, monitoring details, key elements of success or failure, etc.):
20. Challenges encountered **DURING** implementation:
21. Challenges encountered **AFTER** implementation:
22. If results were presented in journals or at conferences, please provide details (authors, title, etc.):
23. Any other information about this example that you want to include:
24. Please attach photos, graphs, PDF files, or any other files that you find relevant to this example, to the email sent back the filled Word file. The total size of attachments should be under 24 Mb / email.