

8th Session of the Meeting of the Parties

Monte Carlo, Monaco, 8 – 10 October 2018

Resolution 8.4

Wind Turbines and Bat Populations



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

Noting the importance that wind energy has in the implementation of the Kyoto protocol to reduce CO₂ emissions in the context of combatting climate change, and thereby contributing to the protection of species from its potentially negative impacts;

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

Recalling Resolution 8.11 on Implementation of the Conservation and Management Plan, which recognises the importance of international information exchange and cooperation in developing monitoring strategies for bats;

Recalling CMS Resolution 7.5 on Wind Turbines and Migratory Species, which calls upon the Parties of the Convention to implement proper impact assessments of wind turbines on migratory species, to assess the cumulative environmental impacts of installed wind turbines on these species and to take full account of the precautionary principle in the development of wind turbine plants;

Recalling the Directive No. 2011/92/EU of the European Parliament of the Council of 13 December 2011 on the assessment on the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment and the Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council No. 2001/42/EC 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;

Recalling the EU guidance document on Wind Energy development and Natura 2000 (2010);

Noting the growing scientific evidence of bat fatalities at wind turbines and the predicted negative consequences for populations of resident and migratory bat species;

Recognising that several bat species forage and migrate offshore and that as a result offshore wind farms may negatively impact bat populations;

Taking into account the cumulative environmental impact of the renewable energy sector through the increasing number and size of wind turbines;

Noting the work of the Advisory Committee in continuous updating of the information included in EUROBATS Publication Series No. 6;

Recognising the importance of avoiding the risk of differences between the methods used for wind turbines impact assessment and need for harmonized and standardised recording and analysis methods;

Recognising the importance of standardised methods to be able to develop effective avoidance and mitigation measures, as well as statistically robust ways to evaluate mortality rates and their impact on bat populations;

Recalling Resolution 8.10 on required experience and skills of experts with regard to quality of assessments;

Noting that the use of blade feathering¹, higher turbine cut-in wind speed² and shutting down turbines are the only mitigation measures which so far proved to be effective in reducing bat mortality at wind turbines;

Recognising also the necessity of implementing research and monitoring;

Recalling the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention);

Recommends Parties and non-party Range States, if not already done so, to:

1. Take into account the impacts that onshore and offshore wind turbines have on bat populations on different geographical scales.
2. Raise awareness and take into account that some habitats and areas, where a negative impact on bats is predicted, may not be suitable for the operation of wind turbines
3. Exclude wind energy developments from areas with a special focus on bat protection

¹ Adjusting the angle of the rotor blade parallel to the wind, or turning the whole unit out of the wind, to slow or stop blade rotation.

² Minimum wind speed at which the wind turbine will generate usable power.

4. Encourage all stakeholders to engage in research on the best methods for impact assessment and mitigating bat mortality at turbines for mutual benefit.
5. Promote continued dialogue and cooperation between all stakeholders in the search for best practice to avoid or minimise the adverse impact of wind energy generation on bat populations.
6. Ensure that appropriate impact assessments are undertaken pre- and post-construction, including mortality rate assessments regardless of the results of the preconstruction assessment.
7. Ensure that post-construction monitoring and mitigation measures continue as long as needed to guarantee effectiveness.
8. Ensure that measures to avoid and mitigate impacts on bats are supervised by authorities.
9. Ensure that impact assessment procedures and post-construction monitoring are undertaken by appropriately experienced experts.
10. Encourage developers of wind energy projects and responsible authorities to make raw data from impact assessment and post-construction monitoring available for independent analysis.
11. Encourage developers of wind energy projects and responsible authorities to make reports from impact assessments and post-construction monitoring publicly available.
12. Develop and ensure implementation of national guidance following EUROBATS Publication Series No. 6.
13. Avoid or reduce bat mortality with measures such as blade feathering, higher turbine cut-in wind speeds and shutting down turbines temporarily.
14. Ensure that proper mitigation measures are prescribed during the approval procedure and are being implemented and are effective.
15. Ensure that information about prescribed mitigation measures are made publicly available.

Requests the Advisory Committee to:

1. Continue to compile relevant information, including methods to assess the impact of wind power generation on bat populations.
2. Update the generic guidelines, now available as EUROBATS Publication Series No. 6, if required.
3. Publish the update, following circulation to all Parties through the written procedure.

Decides to repeal Resolution 7.5.