



COMPENDIUM OF CANADA'S ENGAGEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS AND INSTRUMENTS

Memorandum of Understanding Among the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada, The Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage of the French Republic and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service of the United States of America, Related to the Conservation of Shorebirds in the Western Atlantic Flyway

SUBJECT CATEGORY:

Biodiversity/Ecosystems

TYPE OF AGREEMENT / INSTRUMENT:

Multilateral, Canada –France- United States

FORM:

Memorandum of Understanding

STATUS:

- Signed by Canada 10/17, 2016
- Ratified by Canada 01/19, 2017
- In force in Canada 01/19, 2017
- In force internationally 01/19, 2017
- The MOU lasts for five years from the date of the last signature (01/19 2017) and will be renewed automatically for successive five year periods unless it is discontinued by one of the signatories.

LEAD & PARTNER DEPARTMENTS:

Lead: Environment and Climate Change Canada

Partners: Office national de la chasse et de la faune sauvage de France (ONCFS), United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**Web Links:**

- [Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative.](#)
- [Achieving a Sustainable Shorebird Harvest in the Caribbean and Northern South America – Progress Report, 2011-2017.](#)

Contacts:

[ECCC Inquiry Centre](#)

COMPENDIUM EDITION:

July 2022

PLAIN LANGUAGE SUMMARY

Many species of migratory shorebirds that breed in the Arctic and the boreal forest of North America and winter in the Caribbean and South America are showing major population declines. The specific causes for the population declines have not all been identified, but shorebird experts agree that the unregulated hunting of shorebirds in the Caribbean and South America could be affecting populations and offsetting conservation measures taken on the breeding grounds and elsewhere. The need to quantify and address the effect that unregulated hunting has on populations has been identified as a high priority by the international shorebird conservation community.

Hunting pressure on shorebirds exists in Guadeloupe, Martinique, French Guiana, Barbados, Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana, Brazil and Suriname. The lack of information on species-specific harvest rates throughout the Atlantic Flyway is a major impediment to informing sustainable hunting regulations. In addition, information on population sizes and demographic parameters have limited the ability to determine the impact of harvest on populations.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding is to set out provisions for information sharing and collaboration between the Participants in order to promote sustainable populations of shorebirds in the Western Atlantic Flyway.

KEY ELEMENTS

The parties agree to share information that will improve the understanding of shorebird ecology as well as the management and conservation of populations and habitats. Participants also agree to collaborate on surveys, monitoring programs, harvest assessment methods and data analysis, as well as exchanging information on shorebirds hunting regulations in their respective countries.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This MOU contributes to the development of collaborative agreements among jurisdictions for the collection and analyses of shorebird harvest information. This information will inform shorebird hunting regulations as well as conservation/management decisions within the relevant jurisdictions.

CANADA'S INVOLVEMENT

ECCC has developed extensive expertise in managing migratory game birds, specifically working with hunters to monitor migratory game bird harvest, and in drafting conservation strategies for migratory birds. ECCC will support the partnership established under this MOU by participating in an international working group, which will promote data collection, analysis and information sharing in order to inform shorebird hunting and management decisions within the relevant jurisdictions.

RESULTS / PROGRESS

Activities

Canada contributed to the work of the international shorebird harvest-working group, including monitoring and research, assessing the biological and social aspects of shorebird hunting, developing policies and regulations, strengthening law enforcement and monitoring compliance of shorebird harvest activities.

In July 2019, the shorebird harvest-working group, supported by Environment and Climate Change Canada, organized a workshop in Guadeloupe to take stock of the status of sustainable shorebird hunting, including sharing the latest estimates on harvest levels, implementation of conservation measures, and law enforcement.

Reports

- Canada contributed, with partners, to the development of [A Plan to Address the Sustainability of Shorebird Harvest in the Western Atlantic Flyway](#).

Results

Canada contributed to initiatives aimed at addressing issues related to shorebird harvest in the Atlantic Flyway, including research programs to determine origins of birds harvested in the Caribbean, tracking studies to determine migratory pathways and overwintering sites, and addressing conflicts between Whimbrels and blueberry producers in eastern Canada.

In September 2018, members of the Shorebird Harvest Working Group received the Atlantic Flyway Conservation Leadership Award, which was presented to them in Washington DC by Senator Tom Carper of Delaware.

In the fall of 2019, the *Office national de la chasse et de la faune sauvage de France* announced the introduction of a hunting licence in French Guiana and a training module specifically for shorebird hunters.

In 2021, biologists from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and ECCC, in conjunction with local biologists, worked on quantifying the harvest of shorebirds in Guyana.

Beginning with the 2021-2022 hunting season, the *Office Français de la Biodiversité (formerly the Office National de la Chasse et de la Faune Sauvage)* has proposed additional management measures prohibiting hunting of certain declining species, as well as daily bag limits. These measures apply to the territories of Martinique, Guadeloupe and St. Martin.