

Caucasus Ecoregional Ecological Problems

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The Black Sea flyway bottle-neck provides a unique opportunity to detect trends in waterfowl, raptor and rare and endangered species populations originating from the huge landmass of East-Europe and West Siberia. Decline of migratory bird's populations is caused mainly by the influence of anthropogenic factors (climate changes, disturbance, habitat destruction, persecution etc.). Negligence from local communities and other key stakeholders towards the problem is caused by lack of knowledge and awareness.

Major threats to migratory birds on the Black Sea flyway

- Habitat loss due to climate change
- Oil & gas infrastructure development
- Pollution of rivers and wetlands

Due to the common and transboundary nature of threats on **sturgeons**, a common regional strategy increases conservation impact through sharing of resources, synergizing and cooperative transboundary work streams.

Major threats to sturgeon on the Black Sea

- Blocked migration routes through dams and loss of habitat originating from various forms of river regulation such as navigation, hydropower and flood protection
- Overexploitation stemming from illegal and unsustainable legal fishing/by catch since sturgeon meat and especially caviar are very valuable products
- Pollution

Oil & gas infrastructure development

Russia is one of the global leaders in oil extraction and transportation. At the same time there is still gap in the country policy and capacity to protect wildlife in case of oil spill. WWF-Russia first participated in oiled wildlife rescue (OWR) in 2007 (Oil spill in Kerch straight). We are faced with the problem of absence of any OWR capacity among state agency and NGOs. At the time we work in incorporation of OWR issue in the national oil spill response (OSR) legislation