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Non-detriment finding for Bali myna (*Leucopsar rothschildi*)

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Competing interests: The authors declare no competing interests in relation to this non-detriment finding (NDF).

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Scientific name: *Leucopsar rothschildi* Stresemann, 1912

Common names: Bali myna, Rothschild's myna, Rothschild's mynah, white starling, Rothschild's starling, Bali starling, Jalak Bali

Norwegian name: Balistær

Type of permit: CITES Appendix I; Norwegian CITES Regulation Annex 1, list A
Country of export: Denmark (DK)
Country of import: Norway (NO)

Purpose and source: The proposal concerns the import (purpose-of-transaction code Z – Zoo) of one live Bali myna from Denmark (Randers Regnskov production unit of Fonden for Randers Regnskov) to Norway (Kristiansand Dyrepark AS). The individual is a male bred in captivity (source code C) that hatched 01 July 2020, and is part of the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA) Ex situ Programmes Studbook for conservation breeding.

For Appendix I species (Norwegian Cites Regulation Annex 1, list A) it is required to establish that import will not be detrimental to the survival of that species, in compliance with CITES Article III. In the Norwegian CITES regulation (Lovdata 2018) the criteria for import to Norway are described in Chapter 2, Section 4.

VKM has adopted the definition of detriment, cf. Conf. 16.7 (Rev. CoP17) suggested by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Scientific Authority:

1. Harvest that is not sustainable.
2. Harvest that harms the status of the species in the wild.
3. Removal from the wild that results in habitat loss or destruction, or that interferes with recovery efforts for a species.

Conclusion

VKM concludes that the import of one individual of Bali myna (*Leucopsar rothschildi*) from Denmark to Norway will not be detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild.

The conclusion is based on the following factors:

- The individual is a part of the EAZA Ex situ Programmes Studbook for conservation breeding
- The individual was bred in captivity (there has been no detrimental effect on the wild population)

1. Biological information

Distribution

The Bali myna is endemic to the Indonesian island of Bali and was formerly found across the north-western part of the Island. The Bali myna is almost completely restricted to Bali Barat National Park (Sutomo & van Etten, 2021). A sighting of a pair on the island of Java is thought to be escaped captive birds rather than natural expansion (BirdLife International 2021).

Life history

The species inhabits relatively open habitats (savannah) and along boundaries (ecotones) with other vegetation types (cropland, shrub, forest; Sutomo & van Etten, 2021). There appears to have been a shift in habitat preference from primary forest in the 1980s to more open habitats, perhaps driven by the change in fire regime in the region (Sutomo & van Etten, 2021).

Role in the ecosystem

The Bali myna eats fruits and insects and has been observed drinking nectar from flowers (Sudaryanto et al., 2020). It nests in tree cavities.

2. Population trend

The Bali myna has an extremely limited geographical distribution and a small population size (estimated at between 1 – 49 mature individuals; BirdLife International, 2021). In 1994 the population hit a low of 14 birds (PHPA/BirdLife International-IP, 1997). Despite intensive captive breeding efforts and the release of captive-bred birds the population is still thought to be in decline (BirdLife International, 2021).

3. Conservation status

IUCN RedList Status – **Critically Endangered** due to its small range and population (BirdLife International, 2021).

4. Threats

Habitat loss – The conversion of monsoon forest to agricultural land had a negative impact on the population of Bali myna between 1974 & 1983 (van Balen et al., 2000).

Change in fire regimes – A reduction (control of) in the frequency of fire has led to more shaded habitat in the Bali Barat National Park meaning open areas are less available for the species (Sutomo & van Etten, 2021).

Caged-bird trade – Illegal poaching of Bali myna has had a severe effect on the species. During the 1970s, large scale trading took place despite national and international trade bans (van Balen et al., 2000). Illegal poaching for the cagebird trade is still ongoing albeit at a much lesser scale (BirdLife International, 2021).

5. Conservation and management measures:

International legislation

The species is protected under International and National Laws. It has been listed on CITES Appendix I since 1975 and the EU Wildlife Trade Regulations Annex A since 2023 (UNEP, 2025). It has had national protection in Indonesia since 1970 (Birdlife International, 2021).

Conservation measures

An international captive-breeding programme to restore a viable and self-sustaining population in Bali was established in 1987 (Williams & Feistner, 2006). There are three regional studbooks with hundreds of birds held in captivity for conservation breeding purposes (Collar & Wirth, 2022).

Since 1983, the population has been monitored in Bali Barat National Park, and there has been improved guarding of the park and release of captive bred birds into the wild (Birdlife International, 2021).

The provision of nest-boxes has successfully boosted breeding success with 256 birds counted in 2019 (Collar & Wirth, 2022) in Bali Barat National Park. An introduction of the species on to the island Nusa Penida has had mixed results with some 25 pairs remaining in 2020 (Collar & Wirth, 2022).

6. Trade/use

Legal

Legal trade of even captive bred individuals is strictly regulated (Birdlife International, 2021). Since the year 2000 there have been 242 trades recorded in the CITES Trade Database (<https://trade.cites.org/>). Of these, 218 were listed as "live" and the majority (81) listed as purpose-of-transaction code T (Commercial) followed by 71 listed as purpose Z (Zoo) and 33 as purpose B (Breeding in captivity). Almost all (232 out of 242) trades were with specimens bred in captivity (source code C), and none with source code W (Wild). Only two trades had source code I (Confiscated or seized specimens).

Locally, a government scheme allows locals to get captive birds on 'breeding loan' where, as long as they release 10 percent of the hatchlings, they can commercially trade the remaining 90 percent (Jakarta Post, 2011).

Illegal

As an iconic species in the cagebird trade the Bali myna has suffered through illegal trade. During the 1970s, at the peak of exploitation, trade was thought to consist of 60-80 birds per month (Eaton et al., 2015). Despite National and International Legislation, illegal trade continues. For example, in 2014, a survey of the bird markets in Jakarta uncovered six Bali myna for illegal sale (Chng et al., 2015).

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