

044 Preventing population impacts of wind-energy facilities on bats

ALARMED by evidence that unsustainable numbers of bats, including threatened and endangered species, are killed at wind energy facilities around the world;

ACKNOWLEDGING that decarbonising energy production is critical to meeting climate goals, that wind power capacity will grow dramatically through onshore and offshore expansion by 2030 and beyond, including in biodiversity hotspots of the Global South, and that sustainable expansion of renewable energy requires compliance with biodiversity goals;

CONCERNED that around 30% of bat species are listed as Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable or Data Deficient in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, and are thus considered at risk of extinction as a result of anthropogenic stressors;

NOTING that bats are critical to ecosystem health and are estimated to contribute the equivalent of billions of US dollars annually in ecosystem services that benefit people worldwide;

RECOGNISING that scientific research provides evidence that turbine operational adjustments, such as reducing blade rotation when not producing electricity (resulting in negligible energy loss), and that curtailing operation during high-risk periods (e.g. when wind speeds are low during nocturnal hours of peak migration) can significantly reduce bat fatalities;

APPLAUDING scientific research to refine curtailment strategies and to develop technological solutions that minimise power production loss while reducing bat fatalities, particularly in regions with high bat diversity, or with vulnerable bat populations, or expanding wind-energy production;

AWARE that curtailment strategies to reduce bat fatalities can be implemented with minimal impacts on energy production, and yet requires regulatory or market incentives to reach broad implementation to achieve no net loss of biodiversity;

FURTHER RECOGNISING the work of the Energy Task Force of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), to provide guidance and tools (e.g. a post-construction fatality monitoring handbook) with aims to reduce the impacts of renewable energy on migratory species of wildlife, including bats; and

COMMENDING wind energy facilities that proactively implement scientifically proven measures to reduce bat fatalities and that support scientific research investigating new mitigation measures;

The IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, at its session in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates:

1. CALLS ON States, wind developers, and international financial institutions (IFIs) to ensure evidence-based approaches are incorporated into the planning and adaptive management of wind energy facilities to reduce bat fatalities;

2. CALLS ON States and IFIs to develop requirements and incentives for reducing impacts on bats, with policies that ensure species survival, establishing an equitable system where all wind facilities follow the same regulations;

3. URGES States, wind companies, IFIs and bat experts to facilitate evidence-based policies by establishing networks, collecting standardised bat-fatality data using existing best-practices, making data openly available, and supporting research on technology that will enhance wind facilities' ability to avoid and minimize bat fatalities while maintaining or improving energy production; and

4. RECOMMENDS that wind-energy projects use Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and the mitigation hierarchy to ensure that development follows guidance to reduce impact on bats by:

a. avoiding key bat habitat in siting decisions;

b. minimising fatality by reducing blade rotation when not producing electricity, and by curtailing turbines during periods of high risk for bats (i.e. curtailing below moderate to high wind speeds, dusk to dawn, during periods of high bat seasonal movement); and

c. compensating for fatalities through habitat protection and restoration offsets and/or other mitigation measures.