

Global Assessment of Songbirds in Trade

Prepared by BirdLife International for
the CITES Secretariat



CITES Decisions 18.256-18.259

- **Decisions 18.256 to 18.259** on Songbird trade and conservation management,
 - a) 'within 12 months of the conclusions of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties, commission a preliminary study on the scale and scope of international songbird trade to consider the management and conservation of priorities of songbird taxa involved in such trade;
 - b) consult with appropriate technical experts in the preparation of documents on the conservation, trade management, enforcement and regulatory priorities of the songbird taxa identified,
 - c) convene a technical workshop to consider the findings of the study and reports referred to in paragraph b)
 - d) Invite the members of the Animals and Standing Committees, representatives from range, exporting, transit and consumer States, and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations to participate in the workshop; and.
 - e) make the results of the study and workshop, together with recommendations, available to the Animals Committee for consideration'

- Report 1 - Global Assessment of Songbirds in Trade
- Report 2 - Global Assessment of Songbirds in Trade “A prioritisation of songbirds in global trade”

Data Sources

Abbreviated name	Full name
CITES	CITES Trade Database
LEMIS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Law Enforcement Management Information System (LEMIS)
Market Surveys	A digitised dataset of market survey reports and other sources of information on birds in trade (Donald <i>et al.</i> , 2023)
SiTDB	The Songbirds in Trade Database (Juergens <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
EU TWIX	The EU Trade in Wildlife Information Exchange (TWIX)
WiTIS	The Wildlife in Trade Information System (TRAFFIC)

Additional data sources

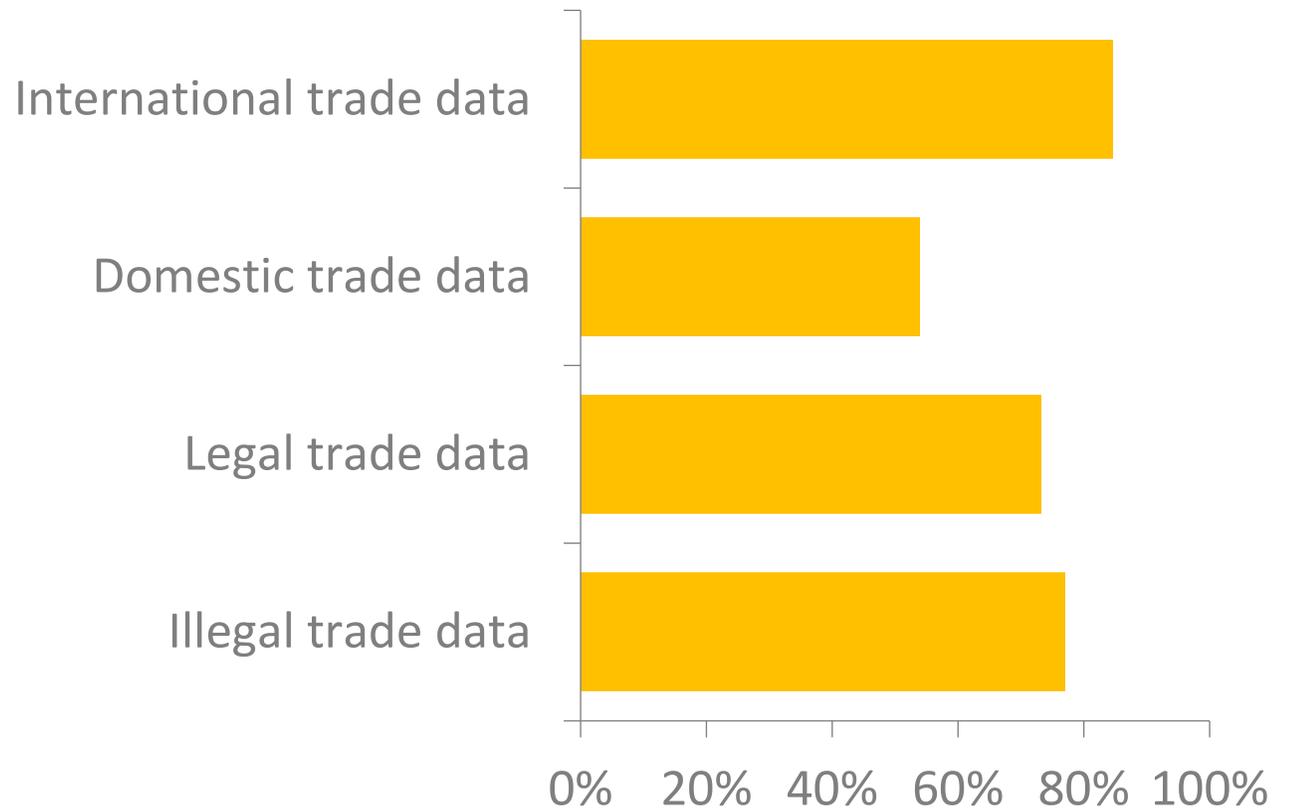
- Literature review conducted for this study including single-species and multi-species studies from the grey and academic literature

- Notification sent to Parties requesting for information to supplement the report e.g., on trade routes and species present in trade.

Notification Summary

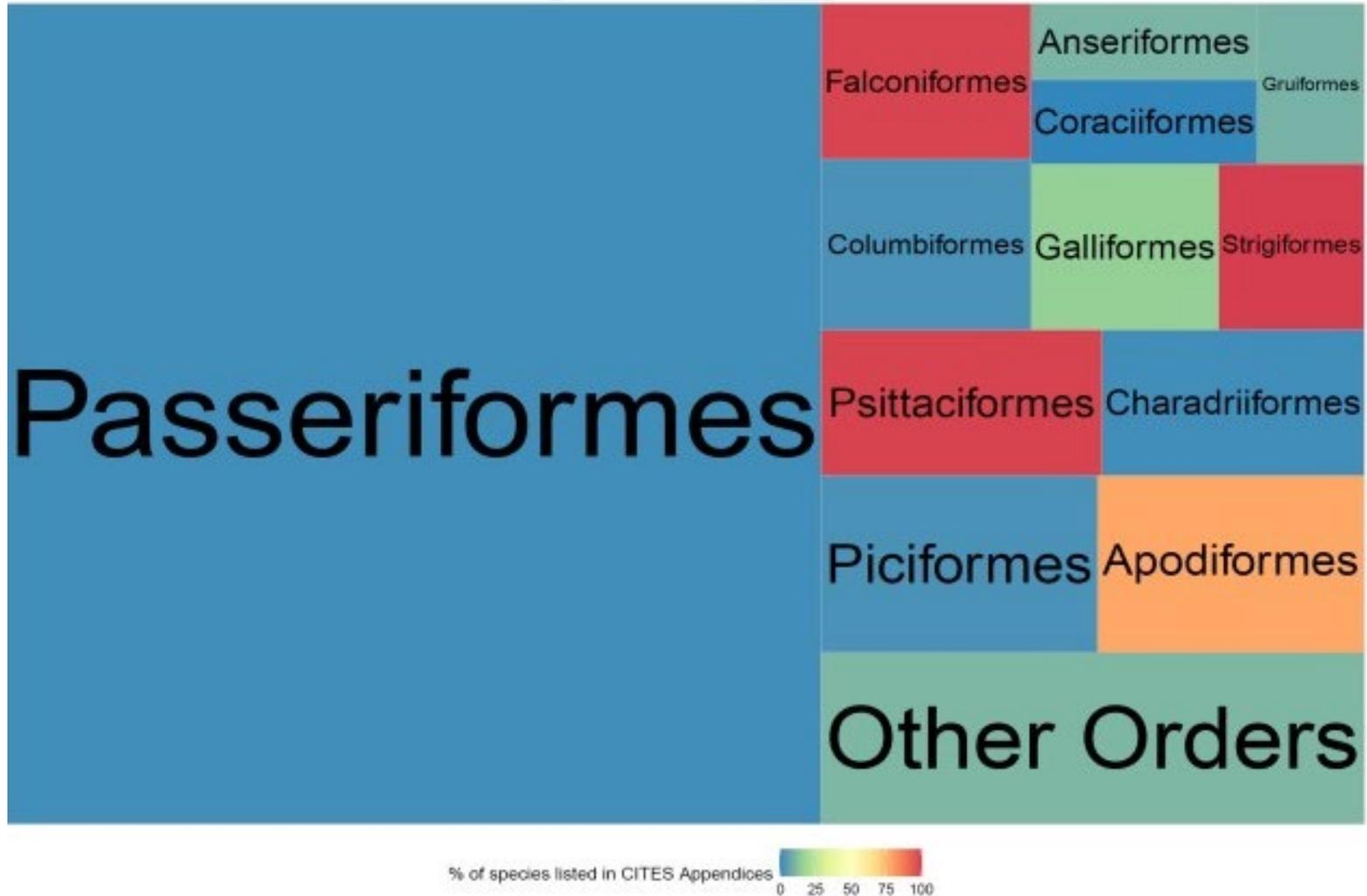
- Notification to gather data on
 - The availability and coverage of trade data
 - The availability and coverage of songbird analyses
 - Domestic and international legal trade
 - Domestic and international illegal trade

What types of trade data does your government/organisation hold on trade of songbirds?



Songbirds and CITES

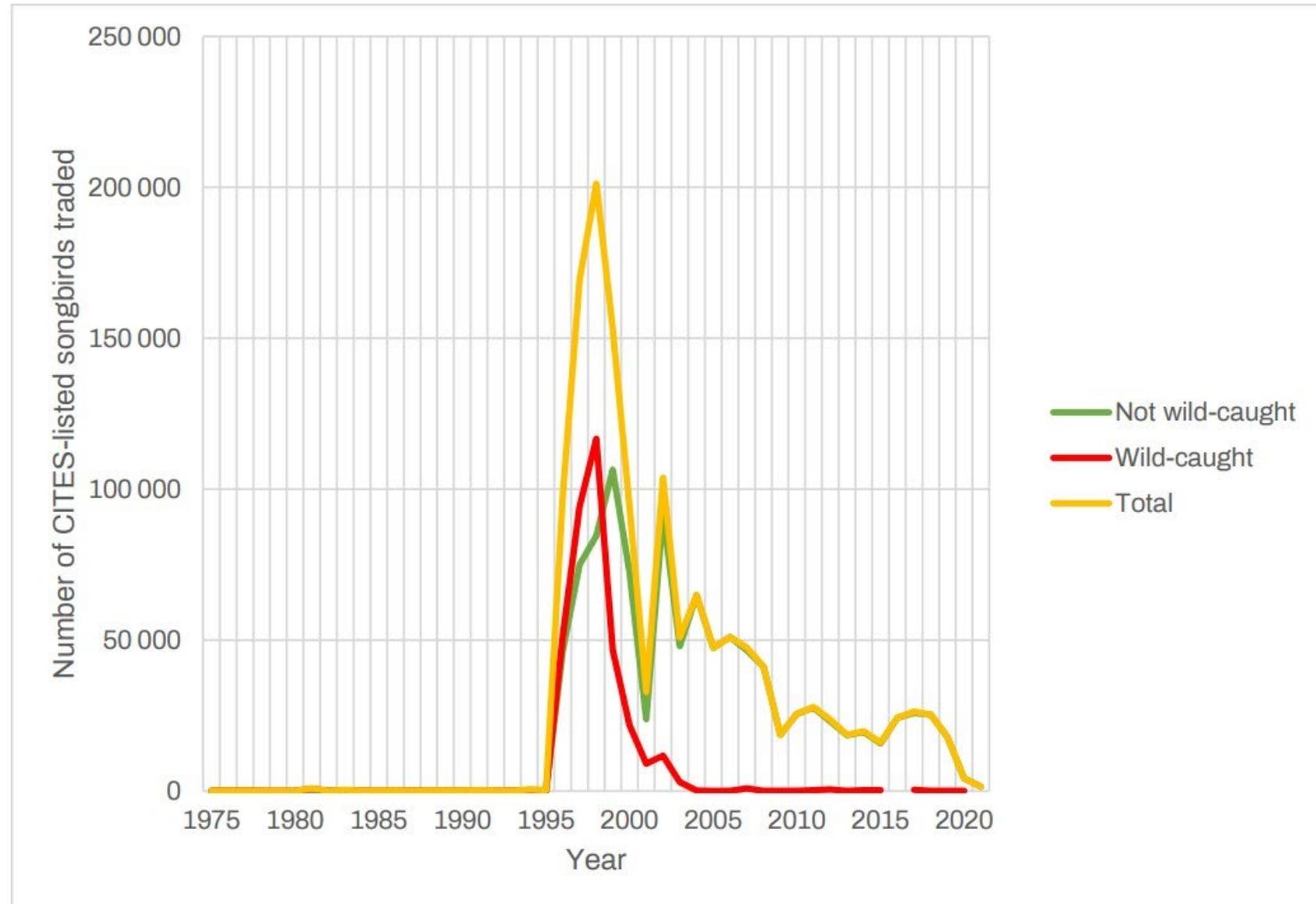
- Songbirds (Passeriformes) make up 60% of all extant bird species.
- Songbirds have low proportional representation on CITES appendices



Volumes of trade in Songbirds

Legal trade

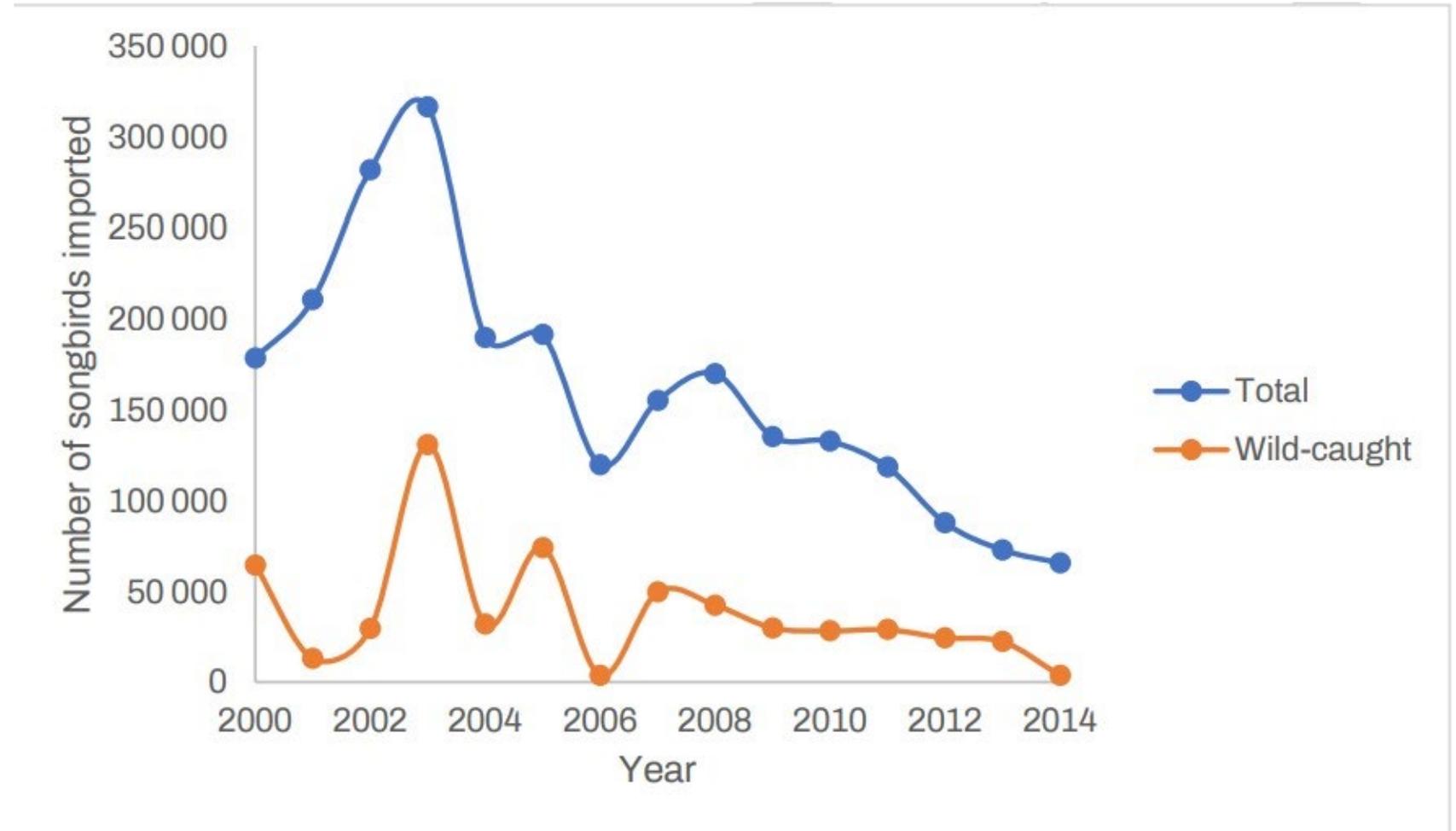
- Sources: CITES
- Trade in CITES-listed songbirds declines through time



Volumes of trade in Songbirds

Legal trade

- Sources: CITES and LEMIS
- Number of import events shows little change; total numbers of songbirds imported declines



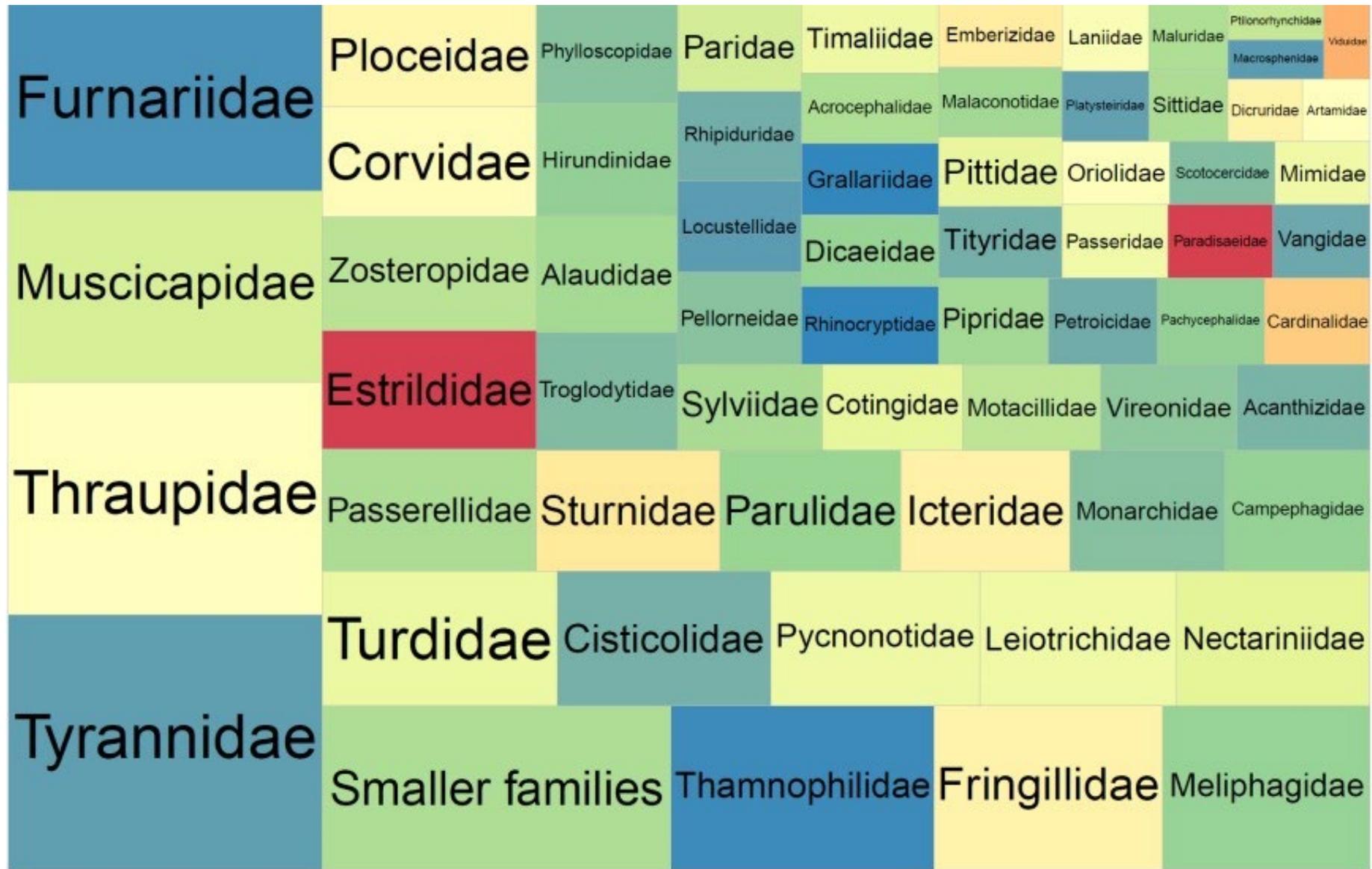
Volumes of trade in Songbirds

Illegal trade

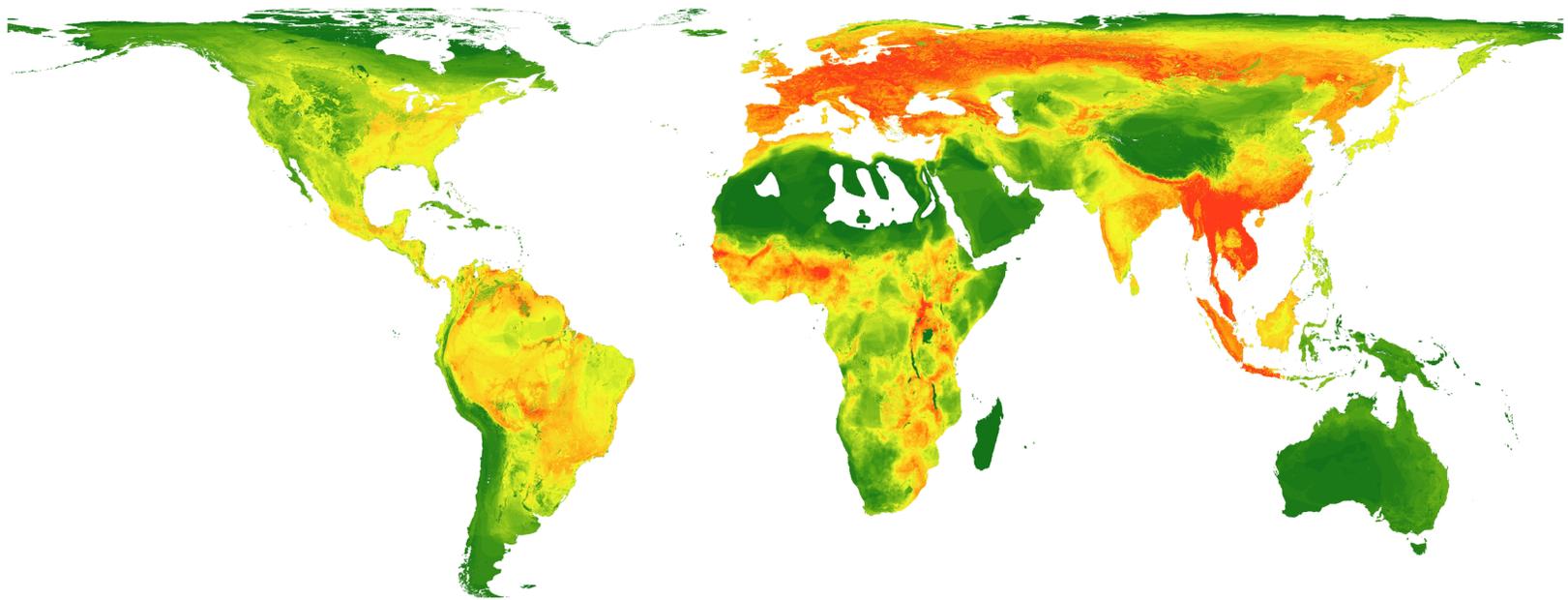
- Illegal trade data sources only show a snapshot of the wider picture
- Estimates of captive populations and seizure data indicate a thriving illegal trade



Taxonomic patterns

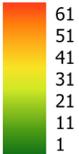


Geographic distribution of heavily traded species



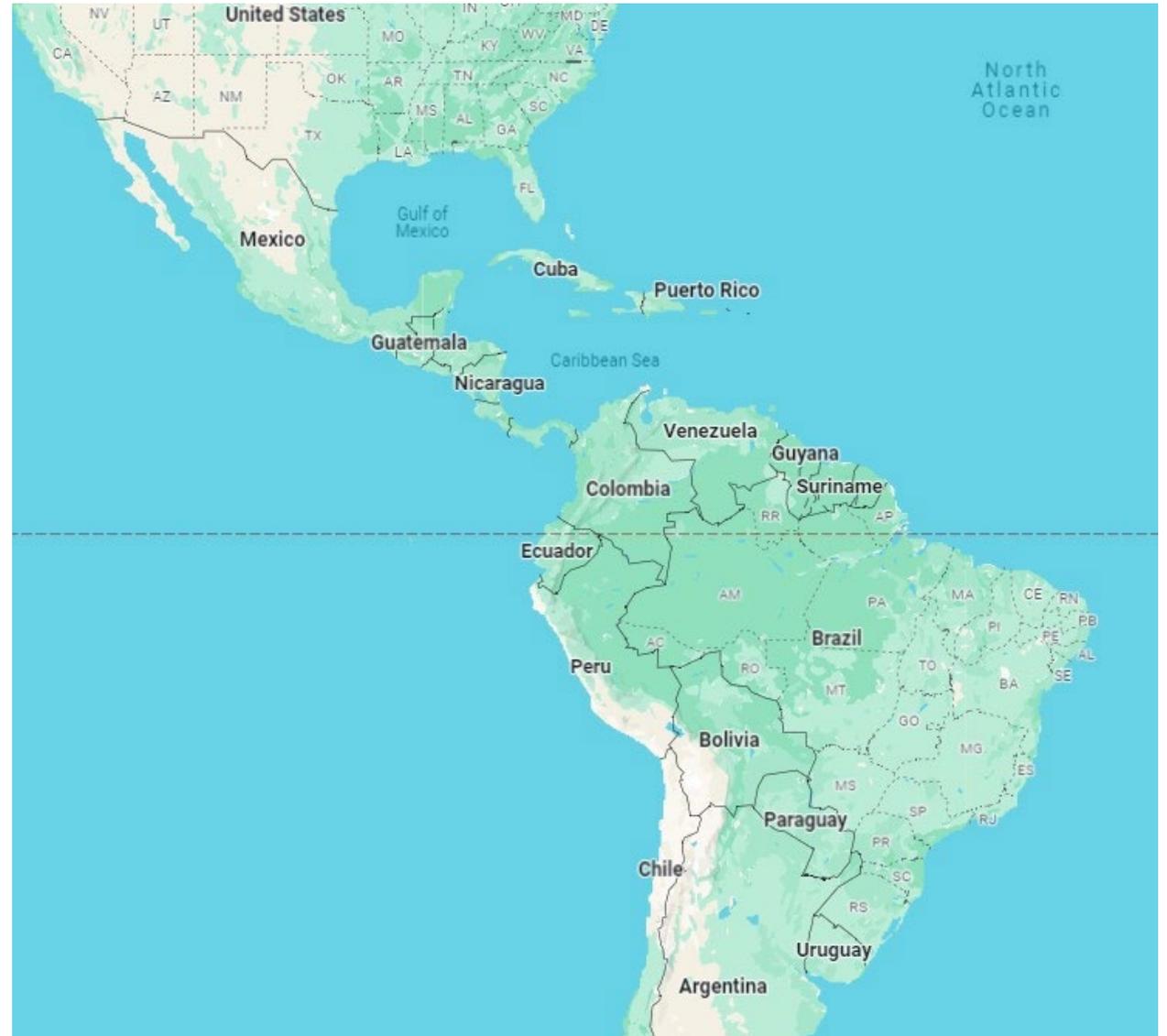
b. Passerines, scores 3-7 (n = 423)

Number of species



Songbird trade in the Americas

- Significant regional trade whilst also connected to global trade
- Several key trading hubs including Guiana Shield and the Southern Cone
- Trade driven by activities such as song contests and fighting competitions



Songbird trade in Africa

- West Africa historically a major export hub
- Some domestic trade mainly for medicine
- Maghreb currently a significant trade hub
- Global trade happening but under-reported



Songbird trade in Europe and the Middle East

- Large-scale illegal killing – connected to trade to varying extents
- Trade in Middle East under-reported

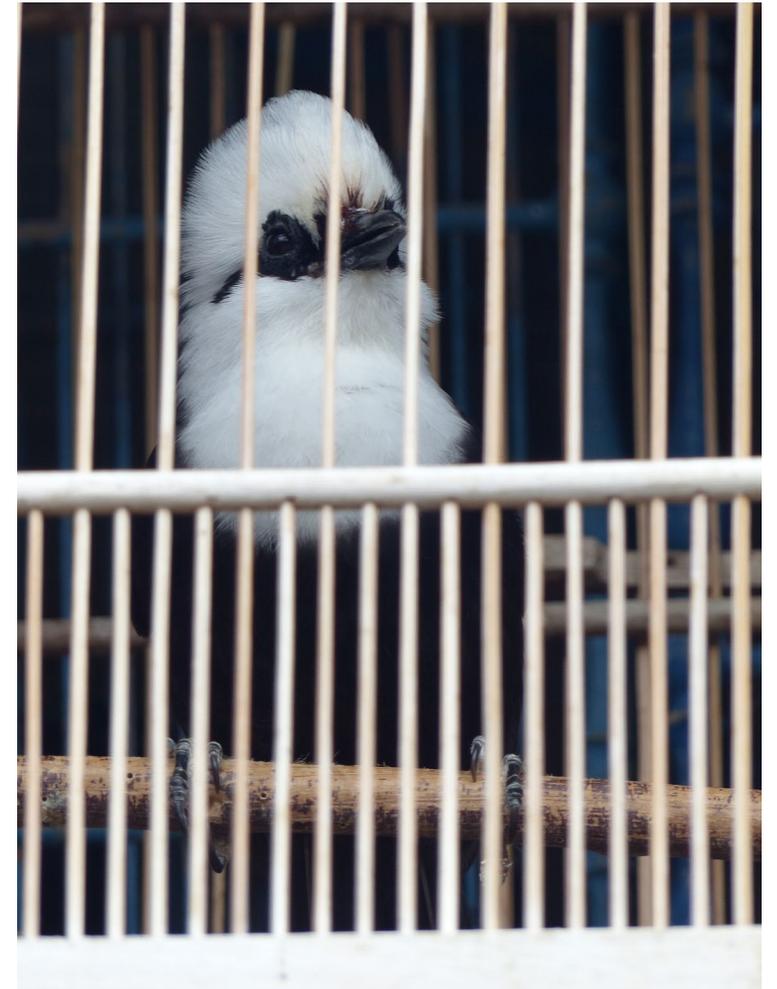


Trends in sourcing of songbirds in trade

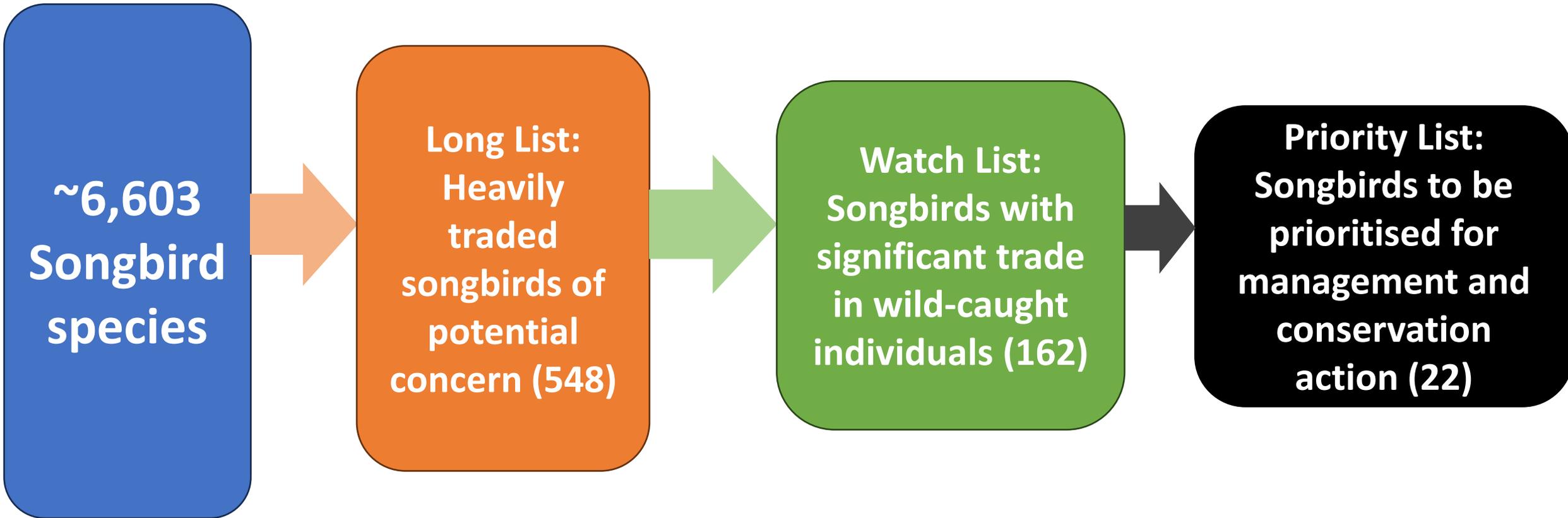
- Wild-caught individuals dominate international trade
- Captive-bred individuals appear to be increasing in legal trade.
- Captive-breeding not necessarily positive for conservation outcomes



Examples of unsustainably traded songbirds



Producing a list of priority songbird species



Producing a list of priority species

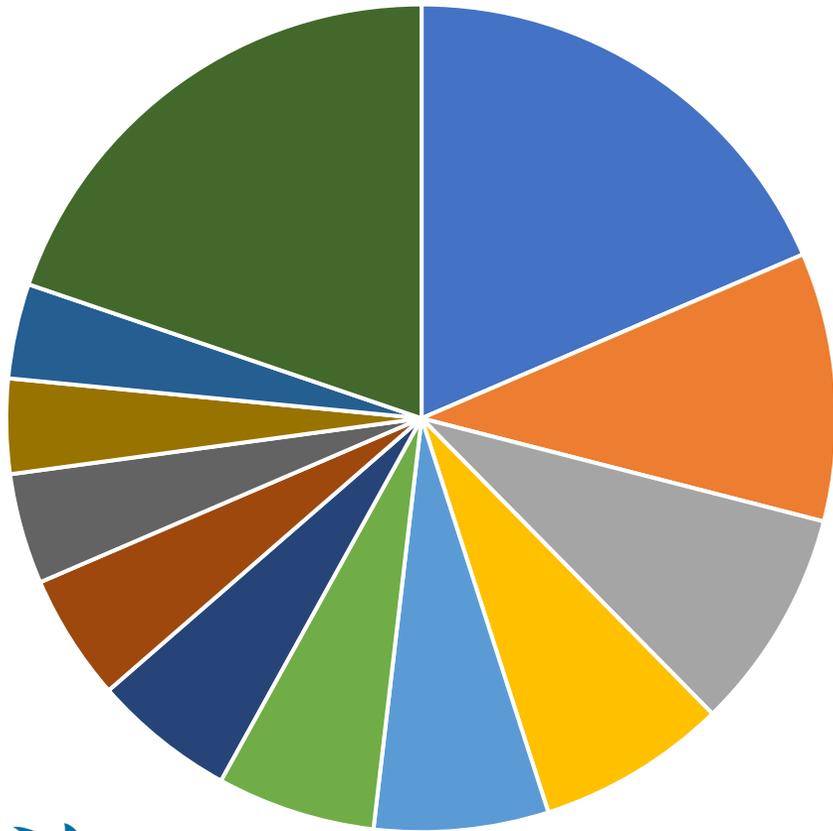
Creating the long-list

- Frequency and volume in trade databases
- Literature evidence of trade
- Reporting by parties

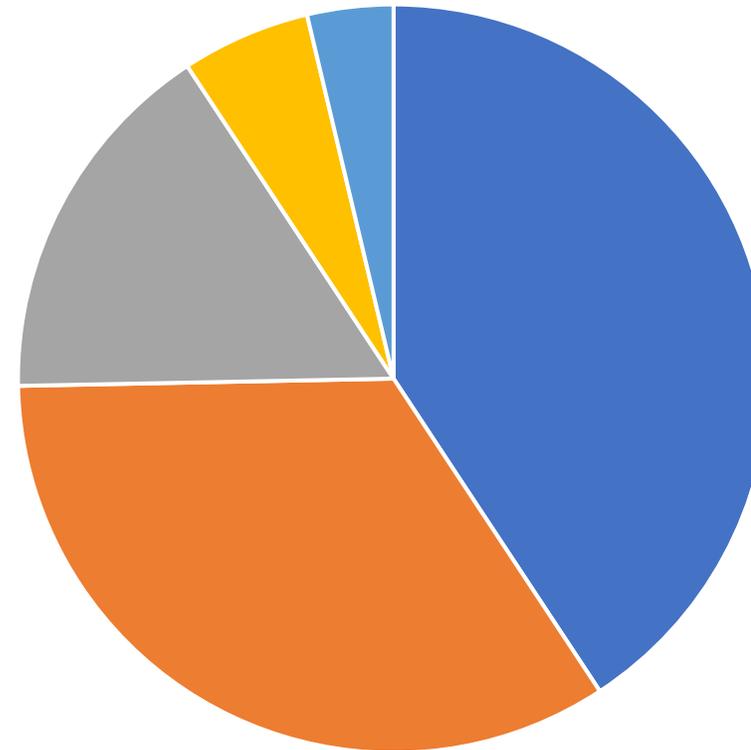
Creating the watch-list

- Not on CITES appendices
- Evidence of international trade
- Evidence of high levels of trade
- Evidence of wild-sourcing of individuals in trade

Breakdown – Songbirds with significant trade in wild-caught individuals



- Thraupidae
- Fringillidae
- Estrildidae
- Pycnonotidae
- Leiotrichidae
- Sturnidae
- Cardinalidae
- Turdidae
- Corvidae
- Icteridae
- Zosteropidae
- Other



- Americas
- S & SE Asia
- Africa
- Palearctic
- Multiple

Common English name	Scientific name	Family	Region	Red List category	Trade score
Oriental Magpie-robin	<i>Copsychus saularis</i>	Muscicapidae	S & SE Asia	LC	13
Yellow-fronted Canary	<i>Crithagra mozambica</i>	Fringillidae	Africa	LC	13
Greater Green Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis sonnerati</i>	Chloropseidae	S & SE Asia	EN	12
Red-cheeked Cordon-bleu	<i>Uraeginthus bengalus</i>	Estrildidae	Africa	LC	11
Red-whiskered Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus jocosus</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	LC	10
Javan Myna	<i>Acridotheres javanicus</i>	Sturnidae	S & SE Asia	VU	8
Orange-cheeked Waxbill	<i>Estrilda melpoda</i>	Estrildidae	Africa	LC	8
Zebra Waxbill	<i>Amandava subflava</i>	Estrildidae	Africa	LC	8
Yellow-vented Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus goiavier</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	LC	8
Javan Leafbird	<i>Chloropsis cochinchinensis</i>	Chloropseidae	S & SE Asia	EN	8
Double-collared Seedeater	<i>Sporophila caerulescens</i>	Thraupidae	Americas	LC	8
Black-naped Oriole	<i>Oriolus chinensis</i>	Oriolidae	S & SE Asia	LC	7
Sooty-headed Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus aurigaster</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	LC	7
Green-winged Saltator	<i>Saltator similis</i>	Thraupidae	Americas	LC	7
Javan White-eye	<i>Zosterops flavus</i>	Zosteropidae	S & SE Asia	EN	6
Great-billed Seed-finch	<i>Sporophila maximiliani</i>	Thraupidae	Americas	EN	6
Brown-cheeked Bulbul	<i>Alophoixus bres</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	EN	4
Aceh Bulbul	<i>Pycnonotus snouckaerti</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	EN	4
Sumatran Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax bicolor</i>	Leiotrichidae	S & SE Asia	EN	4
Rufous-fronted Laughingthrush	<i>Garrulax rufifrons</i>	Leiotrichidae	S & SE Asia	CR	4
Chestnut-capped Thrush	<i>Geokichla interpres</i>	Turdidae	S & SE Asia	EN	4
Ruby-throated Bulbul	<i>Rubigula dispar</i>	Pycnonotidae	S & SE Asia	VU	3

Key questions

- How can Parties better monitor songbird trade in their countries?
- Where might new songbird trade sectors emerge?
- How might criteria for identifying sustainable trade be developed?
- How can CITES address the under-representation of songbirds?

Key questions

- Does the long-list omit any heavily traded species?
- What other filters and/or data could be applied to identify priority songbird species?
- What conservation actions would these priority species most benefit from?
- How can CITES mechanisms best be used to enhance conservation efforts for these species?