

ABSTRACT

Farmland is a very important habitat for many open-habitat bird species. It serves as a food source as well as a breeding and wintering ground. In recent years, however, there has been evidence of population decline in some of these species. This decline is caused by various factors linked to human activities. The aim of this work is to summarise these negative factors and create a comprehensive overview of farmland bird populations status in different parts of Europe. I found that in comparison with other parts of Europe, a much more significant population decline of farmland birds occurs in western and northwestern Europe, mainly due to more intensively cultivated landscapes over the last decades. Central and Eastern European countries are less affected as they show lower intensity of land use associated with numerous small farms as well as the cultivation of spring cereals. In contrast, the abandonment of farmland may be one of the most threatening factors for the whole Mediterranean region. From the perspective of biodiversity conservation, one of the possible solutions could be a lower application of different types of pesticides, cultivation of various kinds of crops or longer-lasting stubble fields.

Key words: farmland, birds, biodiversity, population decline, Europe