

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS OF PREY IN AFRICA AND EURASIA (RAPTORS MOU)

The Raptors MoU aims to promote internationally coordinated actions to reverse population declines and improve the conservation status of migratory birds of prey throughout the African-Eurasian region. The Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MoU is based in CMS Office - Abu Dhabi, the largest regional office of the CMS Secretariat. The office is hosted by Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates.

An Action Plan annexed to the MoU sets clear priorities and timescales to guide implementation of conservation actions within each Signatory State. It presents a holistic framework requiring cooperation amongst governments, NGOs, local communities and scientists. A Technical Advisory Group aims to provide expert advice to Signatories to promote implementation of the Action Plan.

Signatories adapt the implementation of the Action Plan to the needs of the raptor populations occurring in their country and have the opportunity to help shape the policy direction of the MoU as well.



Conservation of Raptors

Migratory birds of prey (raptors) are a varied and spectacular group of birds. In many cases they are long-distance migrants unconstrained by human geopolitical borders and are critical components of biodiversity.

Birds of prey provide many ecosystem services that directly benefit people. For example, falcons eat millions of insects which threaten agricultural crops, and vultures and other raptors consume animal carcasses, which helps prevent the spread of diseases. Raptors also serve as high-level indicators of ecosystem health.

Summary

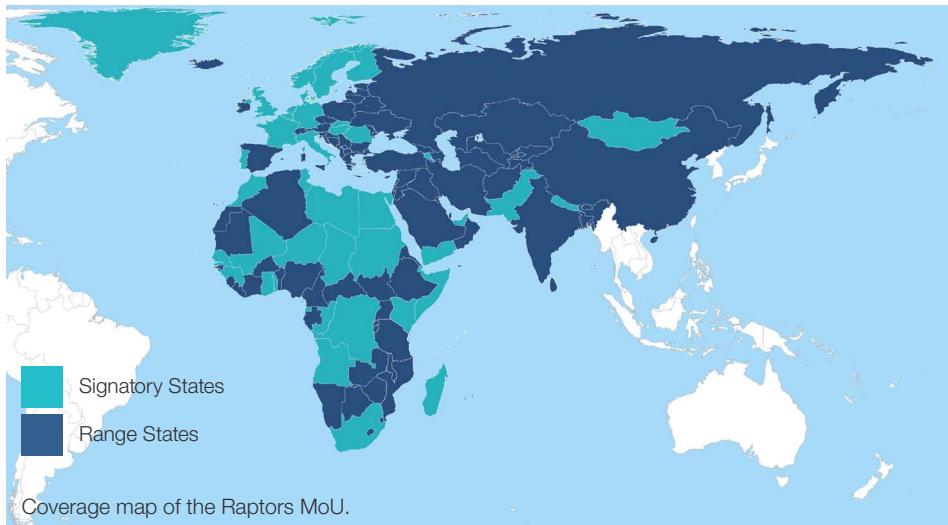
- Effective since 1 November 2008
- Covers 131 Range States across Africa and Eurasia
- 76 species of migratory vultures, eagles, hawks, kites, harriers, falcons and owls
- Activities guided by Action Plan annexed to MoU

Mission

Maintain the favourable conservation status of birds of prey throughout their range

Action Plan Objectives

- Halt and reverse population declines of globally 'Threatened' and 'Near Threatened' birds of prey
- Protect all species from unlawful killing and taking
- Enhance national, regional and international cooperation of conservation activities
- Improve scientific knowledge and understanding
- Encourage research into biology and ecology of birds of prey
- Increase public awareness and active participation in conservation
- Identify and address the key human-induced threats to migratory birds of prey



However, the conservation status of most migratory birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia is in decline, primarily due to human activities. Populations are suffering from fragmentation and destruction of their habitats through construction for housing, industry and infrastructure; intensification of agricultural and other land-use practices; electrocution and collision with power lines; increased mortality due to shooting, poisoning and trapping, including for trade; and reduced breeding success due to pesticides and other contamination, such as heavy metals in their environments.

These combined threats have led to a reduction in population levels, to contraction of the geographic range of many species and to loss of valuable ecosystem services that contribute to human well-being. Concerted and coordinated international action across the migratory range is required to address these pressures and to reinstate and maintain healthy populations of migratory raptors.

The Coordinating Unit strives to facilitate and support Signatory States to communicate, collaborate and coordinate a full range of conservation actions to increase the effectiveness of the Raptors MoU. Working together to develop international partnerships is necessary to tackle the many threats that face migratory birds of prey, and also delivers wider conservation benefits to other species of wildlife and biodiversity.



For more information, please contact:

Nick P. Williams
Programme Officer - Birds of Prey
CMS Office - Abu Dhabi
United Nations Environment Programme
c/o Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates

Email: nwilliams@cms.int
www.cms.int/raptors

