

CMS Raptors IGM – October 2007

Report of the Action Plan Working Group chaired by Issa Sylla

Text of the Action Plan

This report notes the main agreements on text and issues discussed during the sessions of the Action Plan (AP) Working Group. Where agreement was reached, changes were made to the text on screen. For some, text changes were discussed in small contact groups and then considered and accepted in the later plenary sessions of the Action Plan Working Group.

The Chairman, Issa Sylla, welcomed participants to the Action Plan Working Group. He suggested that the best approach was for the group to work through the document discussing text item by item.

1. General aim

Ethiopia recommended that the AP should not be restricted to the raptors mentioned in Annex 1 of the proposed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), and that the wording should allow for other species to be added. There was general agreement that the wording needed to be flexible enough to allow the list of species in Annex 1 to be amended. Portugal/EU clarified that the Annex 1 list should be of all birds of prey that are migratory in Europe, Africa & Asia. The Chairman noted the need to keep the general aim simple and the wording on the Annex 1 list to be clarified in section 3.

There was concern that the Annex 1 text should not be 'closed', and there was some confusion about the source of the list. This issue was not resolved at this point of the discussion. The Chairman noted that the list must be agreed by IUCN.

2. Objectives

There was confusion about the use of the terms ‘Globally Threatened’ and ‘Near Threatened’. BirdLife International explained that IUCN Red List categories of ‘Vulnerable’, ‘Critically Endangered’, and ‘Threatened’ (using capital letters) but are collectively known as ‘globally threatened’ (in lower case), whereas ‘Near Threatened’ is a separate category and so has capital letters. The Chairman noted that the text needed to be clarified in light of this explanation from BirdLife International..

3. Species categories

Para 3.2 – Portugal/EU asked for changes to be made to Table 1, to the following species categories:

Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i>	CAT 2 →	CAT 1
Montagu’s Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i>	CAT 3 →	CAT 2
Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>	CAT 3 →	CAT 2

Changes to the status of Egyptian Vulture *Neophron percnopterus* was accepted, since this reflected a recent change to the IUCN Red List status for the species (recently categorised as Endangered). Proposed changes to the status of Marsh Harrier *Circus aeruginosus* and Montagu’s Harrier *C. pygargus* were not accepted.

4. Priority actions

There was considerable discussion on the actions required which resulted in several changes and additions to the text. A contact group, led by IUCN, agreed to develop new text on habitat issues. Senegal asked and provided text for a new bullet point added on capacity building. A new bullet was point added on the need to adopt an Ecosystem Approach. A new bullet point was added on recreational uses of raptors. A new bullet point was added on research. A new bullet points was added on the need to consider impacts of structures such as power lines.

5. Implementation Framework

Portugal/EU noted that an MoU would not be legally binding, and so requested that the text was changed to reflect this throughout the document. For example, the term 'as required' should be changed to 'as envisaged'.

There was discussion on including threats to 'range' in paragraph 5.2. Wording for a footnote to add in places of document with reference to range was developed and accepted.

Minor text changes were discussed under sections 6, 7 and 8.

Table 1. Categorisation of African-Eurasian raptors covered by the Action Plan

There were proposals for several species additions to Table 1:

- Kazakhstan proposed to add Himalayan Griffon Vulture *Gyps himalayensis* to Category 1.
- Kenya proposed adding Rüppell's Griffon Vulture *Gyps rueppellii* (NT) and Lappet-faced Vulture *Aegypius tracheliotus* (VU) to Category 1.
- White backed Vulture *Gyps africanus* (NT). To add to Category 1.

These proposals were not accepted, and there was considerable discussion on the process for adding species to list. The main points included:

- A need for clarification on what is 'migratory'. BirdLife International noted that technical migrants (i.e. species who show local, short-distance or temporary movements across political boundaries) should not be included.
- A proposal from the Chairman that the CMS GROMS/BirdLife International list should be used and additions should be agreed through GROMS revision process. But there were concern that not all countries are signatories to CMS.
- A proposal that the Action Plan should indicate concerns about the species where new information was becoming evident, and under consideration for addition to list. Kenya proposed adding Category 4 species – which would list those under consideration - to the list. The Chairman's compromise was a proposal that a footnote should be added to Table 1 on species under review and this was accepted.

The Chairman noted the need to share information and reach agreement, and the need to trust the group of experts in providing the list. Proposals should be taken forward at the next meeting.

Table 2. Activities to be done under paragraph 5 of the Action Plan

The text was discussed and considered in light of additional actions identified under section 4. A small contact group was asked to provide text to link the new text in section 4. This was discussed and accepted later in the session.

The issues requiring most discussion included:

- Portugal/EU raised a proposal to add text on use of hybrids in falconry, the proposal was withdrawn after further discussion pending conclusions from the CMS Working Group on this issue. At some stage in the future it may be appropriate to return to this.
- UAE proposed to add text on modifying power lines that pose a risk to raptors, but Lebanon and Ethiopia noted concern that it would very difficult and expensive for some countries to modify power lines. Portugal/EU noted that focus should be on those power lines which pose the greatest risk.
- Israel noted concern about lead pellet poisoning. It was noted, however, that there are other heavy metal poisons of concern also.
- Pakistan requested that the word 'national' be changed to 'relevant institutions' throughout the document as the term has different meanings in different countries especially in relation to how governments are organised within federal states.

Table 3. Important Bird Areas

There was considerable discussion on how the list was produced. The Chairman noted however, that this list is a starting point and should be revised in light of new information to be provided by countries. Portugal/EU noted the need to link Table 3 with the actions.

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19/12/2007