



Memorandum of Understanding
on the Conservation of
Migratory Birds of Prey in
Africa and Eurasia

Distribution: General
UNEP/CMS/Raptors/TAG3/Doc.4

12 November 2018

Third Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group | *Sempach, Switzerland, 12-14 December 2018*

REVIEW OF THE TAG WORKPLAN 2016-2020

Prepared by Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU

1. The second Meeting of Signatories to the Raptors MOU, in October 2015, took note of the 'Work Plan for the TAG until the third Meeting of Signatories'. The Coordinating Unit has since revised and reformatted the WorkPlan, including amending the title of the document to 'Raptors MOU – Technical Advisory Group (TAG): Outline Intersessional WorkPlan (2016 – 2020)', see Annex 1 to this document.
2. Updates to the WorkPlan have been indicated as "Status (Nov 2018)". The Coordinating Unit will present these updates at TAG3 during Agenda Item 4, with certain major activities listed being granted separate Agenda Items.

Action requested

TAG is requested to note the status updates and to identify ways in which to contribute to advancing the implementation of the WorkPlan.

Annex 1:

Raptors MoU – Technical Advisory Group (TAG): Outline Intersessional WorkPlan (2016 – 2020)	
MoU – Activity 1: Improvement of legal protection	
<p>1. Consider amendments adopted by MoS2 to Annex 1 (species) and amend Table 3 (sites) of the Action Plan, and in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) consider further possible candidate Annex 1 species in light of changes to their status as placed under Categories 1, 2 and 3 on basis of global population trends, and categorisation of existing Annex 1 species; b) consider further comments from the Signatories, make recommendations as to the updating of Table 3 of the Action Plan; c) consider any further changes to the geographic coverage of Annex 2 of the MoU. <p>Status (Nov 2018): All of the above items are covered within the consultancy contract with Birdlife International (BLI): All three Activities have been granted separate Agenda Items for discussion at TAG3.</p>	
<p>2. Consider any further changes on raptor taxonomy and nomenclature in relation to species listings within the MoU, having regard to CMS Resolution 11.19.</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): Covered within the BLI consultancy contract: In progress but no changes anticipated (except insertion of Order - <i>Accipitriformes</i>).</p>	
Threats – Activity 2: Protect and/or manage important sites and flyways	
<p>3. Assess and review threats to Annex 1 species and make recommendations on appropriate measures to alleviate these problems prioritising work on the most threatened species and exploring funding and other avenues to stimulate the development of international species action plans.</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): Covered within BLI consultancy contract: In progress. [Need to link with proposed Review of the MoU Action Plan, see Task 6.18 (below)] Activity is granted a separate Agenda Item for discussion at TAG3.</p>	
<p>4. Consider the need for guidance on species re-introduction measures specific to raptors, and in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) advise on any opportunities for international co-operation related to possible re-introduction programmes; and, b) advise the Saker Falcon Task Force, as appropriate. <p>Status (March 2018): It was concluded the Interim TAG had addressed Task 2.4 by deciding to apply the IUCN Guidelines regarding re-introductions. AEWA had recently adopted Guidelines for the Translocation of Waterbirds for Conservation Purposes: Complementing the IUCN Guidelines which David thought might be relevant for raptors as well. It was suggested that a supporting document on raptor re-introductions, available for the Signatories, would be helpful. David suggested that TAG produce a 'Guide to Guidance', which would effectively gather existing guidance into a concise list of resources. He kindly volunteered to compile a first draft. NPW also pointed out that re-introduction was likely to be considered and included as part of the development of the Multi-species Action Plan for Vultures.</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): David has already shared a link to AEWA's 'Conservation Guidelines: Format and Future Priorities' via the online Workspace. The Vulture MsAP was developed and adopted by Parties at CMS COP12 in Manila, Philippines (October 2017). It includes a specific section on conservation (captive) breeding and re-introduction. Guide to Guidance on captive breeding and re-introduction under preparation.</p>	

5. Advise on gaps in current information on key breeding areas, stop-over, refuelling, bottleneck, other congregational and non-breeding sites along raptor flyways, and:
- make recommendations on how these might be filled, and
 - advise on appropriate approaches for the conservation and management of critical areas.

Status (March 2018): NPW suggested that Activity 2.5 could at least be partially covered within the proposed contract with BirdLife International (BLI). Neil suggested species could be grouped according to flyways. Vicky said data was available for the IBA component but complicated for the SPA sites in Table 3 (List of Sites) of Annex 3 of the MoU. Focussing on Category 1 species might be too restrictive so David suggested one way of approaching this would be to look at a few carefully selected species (noting migration ecology) and explore a methodology on these species only. It was agreed that consideration being given to including Activity 2.5 within the contract with BLI.

Status (March 2018): Covered within BLI consultancy contract. Considered dependent upon finalising the Table 3 List of Sites. Activity is granted a separate Agenda Item for discussion at TAG3.

6. Building on existing reviews and exchanges of information with Signatories concerning the negative impacts on raptors arising from collision and electrocution from power-lines, make recommendations to Signatories as to the best means of engaging with the power generation and distribution sectors to address these impacts.

7. Exchange guidance related to the mitigation of negative impacts of other energy generation sectors (e.g. wind and solar), and make recommendations to Signatories to address impacts.

Status (March 2018): Key aspects of Activities 2.6 and 2.7 are included within the CMS Multi-species Action Plan to conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP) adopted by CMS COP12 in November 2017 and are incorporated in draft Strategic Implementation Plan for the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) which includes a Flagship Project to either install or retro-fit a million new or existing electricity poles to make them 'bird-safe'; and, considered by the Energy Task Force overseen by the CMS Secretariat. A Recommendation on combatting electrocution of birds had been adopted at the IUCN Word Congress (September 2016, which includes the need to engage with the power industry (win-win situation for both, including economically). A 'Guide to Guidance' document was proposed and Mátyás volunteered to produce a resources list. An International Conference on the threats posed to birds by electrocution and poisoning took place in Hungary (Nov 2016).

Status (Nov 2018): Threats of electrocution and collision covered in both [SakerGAP](#) and Vulture MsAP with Implementation plans in preparation for both these initiatives. Progress made by several countries and agencies (e.g. International Association of Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) led drafting of [IUCN Recommendation WCC-2016-Rec-098-EN](#) and establishment of dedicated website – www.birdelectrocution.org). UAE announced USD 1 million funding for Project to Combat Electrocution of Raptors at Flyways Summit (April 2018). 'Guide to Guidance' regarding preventing electrocution of raptors and mitigating the potential threat posed by renewable energy under preparation.

8. Provide recommendations on approaches to tackling the issue of illegal persecution including:
- the value of technologies such as electronic tracking methods as means of assessing the extent and location of persecution hotspots, x-ray monitoring, and DNA techniques;
 - possible approaches to conflict resolution – where conflicts with other interests may be an ultimate driver for illegal killing; and,
 - possible approaches to addressing persecution where illegal killing may be a long-standing practice with cultural elements.

An overarching CMS Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Birds (IKB) Task Force (initially covering the Mediterranean region) is leading on this topic.

Status (Nov 2018): Contributed inputs to two IKB Task Force meetings (Egypt, July 2016 and Malta, June 2017) and also IAF led gathering on IKB (raptors) in the MENA Region held in Abu Dhabi, UAE in April 2017. Parties adopted voluntary use of an [IKB National Scorecard](#) at CMS COP12 in Manila, Philippines in October 2017. In addition, BLI has published two important reports covering, IKB in the Mediterranean Region (2015) and IKB in Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East (2017). Awaiting assessment of national contributions to initial IKB National Scorecard baseline exercise. Plans in place to host at least one IKB Workshop, probably in the Middle East region, as part of the EU LIFE funded project to conserve the Egyptian Vulture along its Western flyway (in late 2019 or 2020).

Habitat conservation and management – Activity 3: Raise awareness of issues and guidance

9. Contribute scientific and technical advice on issues and good practice brought to attention of TAG by Signatories to support (a) conservation and management activities and promulgation of guidance, and (b) capacity building to develop guidance, practices and other activities.

Activities 2.4 and 2.7 already includes work relating to preparing 'Guides to Guidance'. TAG2 concluded that no additional action was required on Activity 3.9 until such time as Signatories bring new issues to the attention of TAG.

Status (Nov 2018): No further action anticipated.

Poisoning – Activity 4: Raise awareness of problems faced by birds of prey and measures needed to conserve them

10. Contribute technical expertise on raptors and their poisoning to the work of the CMS Preventing Poisoning Working Group and CMS Energy Task Force.

Status (March 2018): NPW highlighted the support already provided by the CU to the CMS Preventing Poisoning Working Group (PPWG) and that this was anticipated to continue. Also he anticipated CU participation in the CMS Energy Task Force. Borja informed TAG that a Regional Implementation Plan on Preventing Poisoning in the Southern African Region was being prepared based on discussions at a Regional Workshop Preventing Poisoning of Migratory Birds that took place in Cape Town, South Africa in August 2015. No specific additional inputs were immediately required by TAG.

Status (Nov 2018): The Regional Implementation Plan on Preventing Poisoning in the Southern African Region had been published. Poisoning (in various forms), was identified as the most critical threat to African-Eurasian vultures during development of the Vulture MsAP. The 2nd meeting of CMS PPWG was held back-to-back with the Vulture MsAP Overarching Workshop in Toledo, Spain in February 2017 to exploit synergies. CMS Secretariat to provide an update in their report to TAG.

11. Make recommendations on priorities for raising awareness of raptor conservation needs in different regions.

Given all the other tasks to be done, as TAG2 it was decided that Activity 4.11 be put on hold, with no immediate action planned by TAG.

Status (Nov 2018): Awareness raising to be included within Implementation Plans for both SakerGAP and Vulture MsAP. No further action anticipated.

Guidance – Activity 5: Monitor bird of prey populations, carry out conservation research and take appropriate remedial measures

12. Make recommendations as to the crucial needs for common standards for methods, drawing from a review of national experiences and good practices, to:

- a) estimate the size of raptor populations;
- b) undertake monitoring of populations and migratory patterns; and,
- c) assess the threats, current conservation actions (including existing protective designations at sites), condition of habitats, and thus consequent need for further management and protection measures at important sites.

Status (March 2018): NPW pointed out that there are already a considerable number of publications (books and papers) on methodologies relating to the issues covered by Activity 5.12 a) and b) but that with 93 species now listed on the Raptors MoU, this was could prove to be a rather significant piece of work. Vicky said she thought that BLI might be able to contribute to Activity 12 c) but that it might be preferable to delay this work until the amended Table 3 of Annex 3 (List of Sites) had been formally adopted by Signatories (anticipated at MoS3). NPW highlighted that the TAG WorkPlan had been 'noted' by MoS2 so this could allow some flexibility for TAG in light of detailed consideration. Activity 5.12 a) and b) could be addressed via another set of 'Guide to Guidance'. David pointed out that Wetlands International had reviewed important sites for AEWA and may be able to provide some assistance in avoiding pitfalls.

Status (Nov 2018): Task 5.12 c) is covered within BLI consultancy contract (to be completed once Table 3 List of Sites is finalised). During the African Regional Action Planning Workshop to develop Vulture MsAP held in Dakar, Senegal in October 2017, a Task Group was established to consider developing standardised research methodologies and protocols relating to vultures. Ultimately, the Task Group decided that the amount of work required was unrealistic and the activity was abandoned.

13. Develop further appropriate mechanisms for the sharing of data on raptors for the better implementation of the MoU's objectives.

No specific immediate actions agreed by TAG.

Status (Nov 2018): To be considered as part of the consultancy to Review the MoU Action Plan, see Task 6.18 (below). Jari to give a short introductory presentation on the European Raptor Biomonitoring Facility.

Reporting – Activity 6: Supporting measures and horizon scanning

14. Advise the MoS and CU on the perilous state of vultures, noting MoS2 concerns, and provide inputs to multi-species action planning.

Activity 6.14 delivered by actively contributing to the development and review of the Vulture MsAP, led by the CU and adopted by CMS Parties at COP12 (November 2017). Six TAG members attended at least one of the five Action Planning Workshops. In addition, at CMS COP12, Parties adopted all of the eleven Appendix 1 species listing proposals (10 Old World vultures and Steppe Eagle) that TAG had recommended and that members commented upon last year.

Status (Nov 2018): Development of a Vulture MsAP Strategic Implementation Plan included as part of a consultancy contract let by the CU (September 2018). A separate presentation to TAG3 is planned on this topic.

15. Report on issues of concern and for action relating to conservation, management, science and awareness-raising on the horizon, and advise on new conservation practices.

David kindly volunteered to update the Horizon Scanning paper he had developed in advance of MoS2. Andre offered to contribute to this.

Status (Nov 2018): A Horizon Scanning paper is under preparation and a separate session has been programmed in the Agenda for TAG3.

16. Develop an interim National Reporting Form, linked to the CMS Online Reporting System.
17. Advise on the integration of national reporting with strategic planning processes.
<p>18. Review the MoU's Action Plan (Annex 3 of the MoU) in advance of MoS3.</p> <p>Status (March 2018): NPW reported that the CU had not yet received any National or Regional Strategies from Signatories. Given that Signatories would be reporting on their progress in delivering these Strategies, this presented challenges for the development of a National Reporting Form. It was concluded that Activities 6.16, 6.17 and 6.18 (taking note of Activity 5.13 – above) would be addressed together.</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): CU drafted Terms of Reference for this piece of work, including incorporating development of a Strategic Implementation Plan for Vulture MsAP. The consultancy was advertised and Dave Pritchard was recruited in September 2018. Work is now underway to progress the Review of the Action Plan to the Raptors MOU and a separate session has been programmed in the TAG3 Agenda. Draft raptor conservation strategies had now been submitted to the CU by Switzerland (national) and the European Commission (regional) – a separate session on this topic has also been included in the TAG3 Agenda.</p>
<p>19. Support and advise the various CMS Task Forces, as appropriate.</p> <p>Via the CU, TAG had contributed to three key CMS Task Forces covering the threats from IKB, energy and poisoning.</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): Ongoing support being provided. Activities to be considered under Agenda Item entitled Report by the CMS Secretariat.</p>
<p>20. Support other relevant scientific and technical actions for the Raptors MoU listed in the Programme of Work (PoW) on Migratory Birds and Flyways (CMS Resolution 11.14).</p> <p>Development of the Vulture MsAP was the most significant item in the Flyways PoW (available on the CMS website as Resolution 11.14).</p> <p>Status (Nov 2018): No specific additional tasks are assigned to the Raptors MoU in the Flyways PoW. No additional further action anticipated.</p>