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Guidance for National Contact Points of the Raptors MoU

Introduction

This Guidance has been developed to provide advice for current and future National Contact Points (NCPs) of the Raptors MoU. The document sets out the function of National Contact Points, as well as providing information about the role of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) of the Raptors MoU. This Guidance is designed to promote efficient and effective contributions by National Contact Points to the operation of the MoU, and also to facilitate smooth and timely interactions between Signatories through their National Contact Points and the ICU.

The working languages of the UNEP/CMS Raptors MoU are **English and French**, and therefore it is recommended that the National Contact Point is able to communicate in at least one of these languages.

Role of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU)

The ICU for the Raptors MoU operates from an outstationed CMS Office in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, hosted by the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates. The Programme Officer for Birds of Prey (raptors) leads the ICU, which comprises a small team of supporting staff. The ICU acts as the liaison point for all matters relating to the UNEP/CMS Raptors MoU, and is the central coordinating body for all MoU-related activities.

A key aim of the ICU is to develop a mutually beneficial relationship between national Contact Points and the ICU. In support of this goal, it commits to:

- Providing regular updates to Contact Points on developments within the Raptors MoU;
- Forwarding CMS Notifications considered of particular interest to Signatories and/or Range States of the Raptors MoU (e.g. upcoming workshops, calls for CMS grant applications, etc.);
- Circulating and/or publishing news stories or other relevant items (e.g. national workshops, training courses, new publications, etc.) submitted by Contact Points on the Raptors MoU website;
- Acting as a liaison point for Signatories to assist communication, encourage reporting and facilitate activities between and among Signatories and other Range States and interested organisations;
- Providing technical advice or assisting in locating an appropriate source of specialist expertise;

- Listening to the views of Contact Points and responding or sharing such information, as appropriate;
- Being available, on request, to offer advice and clarification on any aspect of the Raptors MoU;
- Arranging Meetings of Signatories, and other meetings or workshops on an *ad-hoc* basis;
- Presenting to the Meetings of Signatories overview reports compiled on the basis of all information at its disposal pertaining to birds of prey;
- Preparing an overview of progress in implementation of the Action Plan and make this available 6 months before the second and subsequent Meetings of the Signatories; and
- Compiling and making available to all Signatories and other Range States the national and international progress reports provided for in paragraph 17 of the MoU.

Functions of National Contact Points

National Contact Points play a crucial role by acting as a link between the ICU and the responsible institutions in the country that they represent, by ensuring and maintaining a constant two-way flow of information. Ideally, the appointed National Contact Point should be based within the relevant Ministry or responsible agency dealing with nature conservation in their country. The following non-exhaustive list details some appropriate functions for the National Contact Point.

Ongoing functions:

1. Arrange formal confirmation of the appointment by obtaining and submitting to the ICU an official communication from your Minister or appropriately authorized Government official, including full contact details. A form can be provided by the ICU on request. Any change of National Contact Point or contact details should be communicated to the ICU as soon as possible after it takes place;
2. Inform the ICU as soon as possible about any changes in the key personnel responsible for specific matters relating to African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey (including owls), so that the ICU can ensure that all relevant communications are targeted appropriately;
3. Consider establishing a national raptor committee, network or an alternative means of regularly exchanging information to bring together representatives of relevant Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies, and other relevant stakeholders, including research and academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector (such as ornithological clubs, falconry groups, energy providers, tourism authorities, etc.). This should help to promote synergies and strengthen national liaison as well as avoid unnecessary duplication of efforts in terms of raptor conservation and the implementation of the Raptors MoU.
4. Check the CMS (www.cms.int) and the Raptors MoU (www.cms.int/species/raptors) websites regularly to keep informed of developments and updates, and share with the ICU key national achievements and actions towards the implementation of the Raptors MoU, as well as any other activities related to the conservation of African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey;
5. Transmit and share information relating to the Raptors MoU as widely as possible within your Signatory country, via the established network of contacts (see paragraph 3 – above);

6. Respond to requests for information from the ICU in a timely manner, including by seeking and coordinating contributions from relevant specialists within the established network of contacts.

Functions related to Meetings and Workshops:

7. Work to ensure that your country is represented at official meetings of the Raptors MoU, such as the Meeting of Signatories (MoS) or workshops, by: coordinating in a timely manner the nomination of the delegation; securing and submitting credentials; and, applying for funding, if applicable and needed;

8. Hold consultations with relevant institutions and individuals in advance of meetings to discuss the Provisional Agenda and any other documents which may be circulated by the ICU in advance;

9. Coordinate your country's inputs for meetings, which may include developing a policy stance, drafting implementation reports including information on raptor conservation and management actions, results of scientific research, threats encountered, etc.;

10. Contact Points may be asked to give presentations at meetings describing recent national activities at the strategic, tactical and/or practical levels, and/or other relevant updates;

11. Finalise a National Report at least 90 days prior to a MoS to enable the ICU to prepare an overall synthesis of the implementation progress of the Raptors MoU;

12. Ensure that any proposed draft Resolutions or amendments to existing MoU documents are submitted to the ICU at least 60 days prior to a MoS. Contact Points are expected to consult widely with interested parties, including via their established network of contacts (see paragraph 3 – above), when preparing or commenting on such documents;

13. Contact Points are encouraged to hold internal discussions prior to a MoS, *inter alia*, in order to explore possible sources of funding that their Government or outside organisations may be able to offer for the MoU;

14. Follow-up on requests made after meetings by the ICU (e.g. commenting on meeting minutes, promoting revision of meeting reports, provision of inputs on proposed Resolutions, etc.) within the designated time-frame;

15. Ensure that the outcomes of meetings are shared with your national network, and discuss and initiate the implementation at national level of any decisions taken, if appropriate;

16. Initiate the internal process required to secure any financial or in-kind contributions volunteered at meetings;

17. Continue dialogue with regional and/or other partners after meetings with a view to implementing any projects and collaborative activities agreed upon during, for example, regional discussions.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact the Head of the ICU of the Raptors MoU: Nick P. Williams, Programme Officer (Raptors MoU), Tel: +971 2 6934624, Email: nwilliams@cms.int