



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals

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PRESS RELEASE

UN-backed Agreement on Raptors Celebrates its 5th Anniversary

Abu Dhabi, 1 November 2013 – Today, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) turns five years old. The MOU was concluded in Abu Dhabi under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS) to stop and reverse population declines of globally threatened migratory birds of prey. The Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU was established here with support from the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates.

UNEP/CMS Executive Secretary Bradnee Chambers said: “The Raptors MOU is playing a key role in protecting endangered birds of prey on a global scale thanks to the support of the United Arab Emirates and other donors. We urge more countries to join the Raptors MOU to help coordinate international conservation actions for these endangered species.”

On the occasion of the 5th anniversary of the CMS Raptors MOU, which came into effect on 1 November 2008, the Coordinating Unit looks back on some significant achievements:

The number of countries that have signed this international raptor conservation agreement has increased by more than 60 per cent since 2008. At present, in addition to the European Union, 44 countries in Africa, Asia and Europe out of a total of 132 range states are signatories.

In July 2012, the Coordinating Unit published ‘*Guidelines for Preparing National or Regional Raptor Conservation and Management Strategies*’ to support countries in developing strategies as part of the Action Plan of the Raptors MOU.

At the first meeting of the Signatories in December 2012, governments agreed on a set of priority tasks to further implement the Raptors MOU. Several flagship projects to halt and reverse the dwindling populations of globally threatened migratory birds of prey have been launched:

Saker Falcon – The Saker Falcon Task Force was established in March 2012 to develop an internationally coordinated Global Action Plan to better protect the endangered Saker Falcon. Government representatives, conservation groups and falconers met in September to further develop a comprehensive plan for the recovery of this endangered species.

Sooty Falcon – Earlier this year, experts began developing of an International Action Plan for this species which might be threatened with extinction in the near future.

Egyptian Vulture – A number of local ornithologists in north-east Africa were trained to collect data on the ecology of this endangered species, which is in particular threatened by electrocution by power lines and poisoning.

"The Saker Falcon Task Force is one the many excellent examples of how the Raptors MOU has already proved immensely valuable in offering a mechanism to bring together representatives of governments, NGOs and other stakeholders, to develop conservation solutions to address the many

and increasing challenges that threaten migratory raptors," said Nick Williams, Head of the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU.

Looking ahead, the Coordinating Unit of the CMS Raptors MOU will strive to collaborate even more closely with Signatory States, other countries and partners to conserve migratory birds of prey in the African-Eurasian region.

Notes to Editors:

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) works for the conservation of a wide array of endangered migratory animals worldwide. CMS, which is administered by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), is a global biodiversity convention with special expertise in the field of migratory species. At present, there are 119 Parties to the Convention. www.cms.int

The CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) is administered by a Coordinating Unit based in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The Raptors MOU covers 76 species and extends to over 132 Range States and territories in the African-Eurasian Region. www.cms.int/species/raptors

The Guidelines can be downloaded from the following link:

http://www.cms.int/species/raptors/pdf/guidelines_nat_reg_cons_manage_strat.pdf .

Meeting Report of the first Meeting of the Signatories can be downloaded from the following link:

<http://www.cms.int/species/raptors/meetings.htm>

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