



## CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES OFFICE - ABU DHABI (CMS OFFICE - ABU DHABI)

Recently fledged Eastern Imperial Eagle (*Aquila heliaca*) © Andras Kovacs, www.raptorimages.hu, Dugong (*Dugong dugon*) © Kristina Vackova

### SUMMARY

- Established in 2009
- Only regional office of the CMS Secretariat
- Home to the Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit and Dugong MOU Secretariat
- Promotes CMS and its agreements in the West Asian and North-west Indian Ocean regions

### Host

Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

### Activities

- Oversee implementation of the Dugong MOU and Raptors MOU
- Promote conservation of regionally important migratory species and their habitats
- Develop single and multi-species action plans
- Convene regular MOU meetings of Signatory States
- Develop international capacity building projects
- Host expert group meetings
- Develop multi-level partnerships
- Support conservation actions

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) is the only global biodiversity-related treaty specializing in the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species, their habitats and migration routes. CMS Parties work to ensure a favourable conservation status for migratory species across their range. CMS acts as a framework convention and its agreements vary from legally binding treaties to less formal instruments, such as Memoranda of Understanding.

CMS Office – Abu Dhabi oversees implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU), and the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Dugongs and their Habitats throughout their Range (Dugong MOU). The office also addresses common threats to migratory species of regional interest including birds, whales, dolphins and marine turtles, while promoting CMS and its agreements in the West Asian and North-west Indian Ocean regions.

Established in 2009, the office is hosted by Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and operates under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme.

Since 2009, CMS Office – Abu Dhabi has undertaken a wide range of internationally significant activities to support the implementation of the Dugong and Raptors MOUs, and to conserve other regionally important migratory species and their habitats. Major activities have included developing multi-level partnerships, convening regular MOU meetings of Signatories, hosting expert group meetings, developing single or multi-species action plans, and leveraging additional finance. The office has developed international projects to build capacity in developing nations to support conservation actions. CMS Office – Abu Dhabi frequently works with agencies in the UAE to execute activities of regional significance.

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## Dugongs MOU

The Dugong MOU promotes internationally coordinated actions to ensure the long-term survival of dugongs and their seagrass habitats throughout their extensive range. The MOU's Signatory States implement activities, which address the conservation of dugongs and their seagrass habitats, improved understanding of dugongs through research and monitoring, public awareness and education, and enhancing cooperation on national, regional and international scales.

Dugongs are found in 46 countries and the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species classifies dugongs as 'Vulnerable', and they are listed on Appendix II of CMS. Threats to dugongs are bycatch, direct catch, vessel strike and destruction of their seagrass habitats. Threats to seagrasses include damaging fishing methods, development of coastal areas, pollution and climate change.

## Raptors MOU

The Raptors MOU includes 93 species of migratory vultures, eagles, hawks, kites, falcons and owls, covering 131 countries across Africa and Eurasia. The Raptors MOU promotes internationally coordinated actions to reverse population declines and improve the conservation status of migratory birds of prey throughout Africa and Eurasia. Its implementation requires cooperation amongst governments, NGOs, local communities and scientists.

Threats to raptors include electrocution from and collision with power infrastructure, poisoning, illegal take and habitat loss. This has led to a reduction in population levels, contraction of many species' geographic range, and loss of valuable ecosystem services that contribute to human well-being.



Photos: African White-backed Vulture © Andre Botha; Dugong with calf © Mandy Etipson

## Key Achievements

- CMS Dugong MOU Standardised Dugong Catch and Bycatch Questionnaire (2010)
- Dugong, Seagrass and Coastal Communities Initiative (2012 – ongoing)
- Guidelines for Preparing Raptor Conservation Strategies (2012)
- Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (2014)
- GEF Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project (2015 – 2019)
- Egyptian Vulture Flyway Action Plan (2016)
- Dugong and Seagrass Research Toolkit (2017)
- Cinereous Vulture Flyway Action Plan (2017)
- Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (2017)
- Arabian Peninsula Waterbird Monitoring Strategy (2018)
- IKI Seagrass Ecosystem Services Project (2019 – 2022)

## Contact



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For more Fact Sheets please visit: <http://www.cms.int/en/publications/factsheets>



## CMS Office - Abu Dhabi and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals that the CMS Office – Abu Dhabi contributes to include: SDG1 – No Poverty, SDG2 – Zero Hunger, SDG5 – Gender Equality, SDG8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth, SDG9 – Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, SDG12 – Responsible Consumption and Production, SDG13 – Climate Action, SDG14 – Life Below Water, SDG15 – Life on Land, and SDG17 – Partnerships for the Goals