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MIGRATORY
SPECIES**

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**IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE
CONSERVATION OF SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICAN MIGRATORY GRASSLAND BIRD
SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS**

(Brazil and Uruguay)

This document reports on the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats (MdE Pastizales). It summarizes progress achieved between 2018 and 2025, highlights challenges, and presents the adoption of an updated Action Plan for the next implementation cycle (2025-2029), endorsed by the MoU.

IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICAN MIGRATORY GRASSLAND BIRD SPECIES AND THEIR HABITATS

Introduction

This Information Document summarizes the progress achieved between 2018 and 2025 under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Birds and their Habitats (MdE Pastizales). It highlights key challenges and outlines perspectives for the next implementation cycle.

South American grasslands are vital natural ecosystems that sustain a remarkable diversity of plant and animal species while providing essential environmental services for human well-being. These landscapes offer not only beauty and cultural inspiration but also economic value through tourism and extensive livestock farming. When properly managed, cattle grazing can contribute to the conservation of native vegetation, maintaining ecosystem balance, and supporting a healthy carbon cycle. Different bird species depend on the varied structure of these habitats — some requiring tall, dense grasslands, others thriving in short grasslands or mosaic environments — making habitat heterogeneity crucial for maintaining biodiversity and ecological resilience.

However, these ecosystems face mounting pressures from human activities that threaten their integrity. The main drivers of degradation include habitat loss and conversion for agriculture and forestry, the introduction of invasive species, pollution, poor livestock practices, and the inappropriate use of fire. Reforestation with non-native trees such as pine and eucalyptus, as well as overgrazing beyond the land's carrying capacity, further disrupts native ecosystems and reduces species diversity. While sustainable grazing and pasture management can serve as valuable conservation tools, improper practices — including intensive mowing, exotic forage introduction, and pesticide use — accelerate habitat degradation and endanger numerous bird species that depend on these grasslands for survival.

The Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Bird Species and their Habitats, also known as *MdE Pastizales* (in Spanish) was established on August 26, 2007, with the signing of representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay and Brazil, who committed to join efforts for the conservation of migratory bird species that depends on the natural grasslands of southern South America. This commitment aims to address conservation challenges at a regional scale, promoting cooperation among countries to protect critical habitats and mitigate the threats that affect these birds and their ecosystems. The MoU currently covers 11 priority grassland bird species, listed in CMS Appendices I and II, many of which are threatened or endangered.

Three Meetings of Signatories (MOS1–2010, MOS2–2018, MOS3–2024) have guided the Action Plan's implementation and updated conservation priorities. Brazil coordinated the MoU between 2018 and 2024, supported by the CMS, Manomet, and partner organizations.

Meetings of the Signatories (MOS1 and MOS2)

On December 14, 2010, the First Formal Meeting of Signatories (MOS1) of the MoU was held in Asunción, Paraguay. During this meeting, government representatives approved the International Action Plan, which was intended to guide efforts from 2010 to 2015.

In 2018, with the need to evaluate the Action Plan implementation and to begin planning for a new cycle, the Second Meeting of the MoU (MOS2) was held on July 24-25, in Florianópolis/SC, organized by the Brazilian Ministry of the Environment (MMA) together with the National Center for Bird Conservation of the Chico Mendes Chico Institute for Biodiversity Conservation – CEMAVE/ICMBio, with the support from Manomet and the CMS Secretariat.

The MOS2 aimed to review the status of the species covered by the MoU and to renew conservation projects and initiatives. Additionally, it focused on updating the Action Plan, extending the MoU's signature to other countries in the region, and establishing a stable and lasting coordination mechanism. The inclusion of countries that are range states for the MoU species has also been suggested. A format for future national reports was adopted, and the objectives and targets of the Action Plan were reviewed and updated.

There was the inclusion of a new species in the Memorandum, *Dolichonyx oryzivorus* (Bobolink), along with a suggestion of including the species [Sporophila iberaensis](#) (Ibera Seedeater) under CMS appendices so that it can later be included in the MoU.

There was a discussion about potentially changing the geographical scope of the MoU. However, to strengthen this instrument, it was decided to maintain the focus on the five signatory countries and the current geographical distribution. Other countries outside the region will be invited to join as observers, allowing them to share their experiences.

The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) became a Cooperating Partner of the MoU.

The Secretariat has proposed a rotating coordination mechanism. Brazil agreed to take on this coordination role, which was intended to last until 2022, with the support of the CMS Secretariat. However, due primarily to challenges arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, this period has been extended.

1st Virtual Meeting

A virtual meeting on monitoring the Action Plan of the MoU on the Conservation of Southern South American Migratory Grassland Birds and their Habitats was held from September 1-4, 2020. The virtual meeting was organized by the Government of Brazil in collaboration with the CMS Secretariat during the COVID-19 pandemic, to maintain communication with members and reaffirm commitment to the MoU and the conservation of birds in the southern regions.

The objective of the virtual meeting was to review and discuss the actions each country has taken to achieve the five objectives of the Action Plan agreed upon by the Signatories participating in MOS2. To prepare for the meeting, the coordination team of the MOU of the Government of Brazil

created a monitoring spreadsheet and request that the members to complete it prior to the meeting.

The Government of Brazil was taking the lead in coordinating the implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan, following the rotational coordination mechanism established at the MOS2, in 2018. This coordination continued until the next meeting, MOS3.

Third Meeting of the Signatories (MOS3)

The Third Meeting of the Signatories (MOS3) was held in Florianópolis, Brazil, on 2–3 December 2024 in hybrid format. Representatives from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and observers participated. The meeting reviewed progress under the MOU, updated the Action Plan, identified gaps and threats, and discussed future steps. Brazil, as the MOU coordinator, presented achievements such as expanded protected areas, awareness campaigns, and research initiatives, while also noting challenges like limited funding.

Key meeting outcomes included significant progress in implementing the MOU's objectives and commitments. Reports were presented showing advancement across habitat protection, grassland management, community awareness, policy development, and international cooperation—though stronger national legislation remains needed. Regarding the evaluation of the Action Plan, 51% of the actions were progressing as planned, 37% were underway but faced implementation challenges, while 12% had not yet been initiated. Despite these difficulties, most activities continued to make progress. The meeting welcomed the potential expansion of the MOU to new range states, with Chile expressing interest, and created a New Species Listing Working Group to review species for potential inclusion under the MoU. Uruguay was designated as the next coordinator, supported by Brazil during a transition period, and a Coordination Mechanism Update Working Group was formed. Funding opportunities were also discussed and the CMS Secretariat presenting strategies, including Global Environment Facility - GEF initiatives to enhance ecosystem connectivity.

Second Virtual Meeting on the Action Plan of the MoU

The Second Virtual Meeting of the Grasslands MoU was held on 27-29 August 2025 with the objective to finalize the update of the Action Plan, initiated at MOS3.

The meeting resulted in the adoption of the updated Action Plan for 2025–2029, in alignment with the CMS Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS 2024–2032). The MoU Action Plan is structured around five strategic objectives. These include the protection and sustainable management of grasslands, emphasizing habitat conservation, sustainable livestock practices, and the integration of bird conservation into protected area management. Enhanced monitoring and research were also prioritized, with commitments to expand demographic and ecological studies, improve data sharing, address invasive species, and establish a scientific advisory group. Additionally, efforts will focus on awareness and communication, through campaigns against illegal trade, targeted outreach to policymakers and landowners, and activities celebrating the 2026 International Year of Grasslands. Further priorities include strengthening policies and collaboration by improving legislation, enforcement, and cross-sector cooperation, as well as advancing international cooperation through shared data systems, coordination with regional mechanisms such as MERCOSUR and Red Parques, and alignment with global frameworks including NDCs,

NBSAPs, and LDN targets. The plan also reinforces the integration of regional objectives with the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2024–2032.

Despite these advances, challenges remain, such as the need for clearer responsibilities, measurable indicators, and incentives for engagement, as well as overcoming the persistent undervaluation of grasslands relative to forests and the conflicts posed by divergent national policies.

The meeting reaffirmed the critical importance of regional cooperation to ensure the long-term conservation of migratory grassland bird species and their habitats. By linking conservation goals with socio-economic incentives and global biodiversity and climate agendas, the updated Action Plan lays the foundation for more coordinated and impactful action across the region.

MoU Species

The following table 1 and 2 list the 11 species currently listed under the MoU: they are mainly passerines, but there are also two shorebirds.

During the MOS3, a working group was established with the objective of reviewing the list of species, which were divided into two categories: (1) species already listed in CMS Appendix II, which could be directly incorporated into the MoU, and (2) species not yet listed, which would require the preparation of proposals to amend the CMS Appendices. From this group, the following species were proposed for inclusion in the MoU: *Sporophila iberaensis*, *Limosa haemastica*, *Calidris fuscicollis*, *Tringa flavipes*, and *Tringa melanoleuca*. However, a new mechanism for the inclusion of species in the MoU will still be proposed by the group.

Table 1. List of the MoU Species¹.

Species	English	Spanish
Charadriiformes		
Scolopacidae		
<i>Numenius borealis</i>	Eskimo Curlew	Zarapito boreal, zarapito esquimal, chorlo polar
<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Playerito canela
Passeriformes		
Tyrannidae		
<i>Polystictus pectoralis pectoralis</i>	Bearded Tachuri	Tachuri, tachuri canela
<i>Alectrurus tricolor</i>	Cock-Tailed Tyrant	Yetapá chico
<i>Alectrurus risora</i>	Strange-Tailed Tyrant	Yetapá de collar, tijereta de las pajas
Icteridae		
<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	Bobolink	Charlatan
<i>Xanthopsar flavus</i>	Saffron-Cowled Blackbird	Tordo amarillo, dragón
Thraupidae		

<i>Sporophila ruficollis</i>	Dark-Throated Seedeater	Capuchino garganta café
<i>Sporophila palustris</i> *	Marsh Seedeater	Capuchino pecho blanco
	Gray-And-Chestnut	
<i>Sporophila hypochroma</i>	Seedeater, Rufous-Rumped Seedeater	Capuchino castaño
<i>Sporophila cinnamomea</i>	Chestnut Seedeater	Capuchino corona gris

¹ CMS website: <https://american-grassland-birds.cms.int/species>. *included *Sporophila zelichi*.

Table 2. Species distribution, conservation status and CMS appendices.

Species ¹	Distribution - countries of MOU ²					IUCN	CMS
	ARG	BOL	BRA	PAR	URU	Red List ²	Appendix ¹
<i>Numenius borealis</i>	x		x	x	x	CR*	I
<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>	x	x	x	x	x	VU	I, II
<i>Polystictus pectoralis pectoralis</i>	x	x	x	x	x	NT**	II
<i>Alectrurus tricolor</i>	x	x	x	x		VU	I, II
<i>Alectrurus risora</i>	x		x	x	x	VU	I, II
<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	x	x	x	x		NT	II
<i>Xanthopsar flavus</i>	x		x	x	x	EN	I, II
<i>Sporophila ruficollis</i>	x	x	x	x	x	NT	II
<i>Sporophila palustris</i>	x		x	x	x	EN	I, II
<i>Sporophila hypochroma</i>	x	x	x	x	x	NT	I, II
<i>Sporophila cinnamomea</i>	x	x	x	x	x	VU	I, II

¹ CMS website: <https://www.cms.int/en/species>. ²IUCN 2025: <https://www.iucnredlist.org>. * N. *borealis* is considered Possibly Extinct; ** status of the species *P. pectoralis*.

Conclusion

The conservation of migratory grassland birds is directly linked to the preservation of natural grasslands, ecosystems that are among the most threatened globally. Despite recent advances, several threats persist, including habitat conversion, invasive species, inadequate fire and grazing management, and the illegal capture and trade of species—pressures further intensified by climate change. Strengthened regional cooperation, capacity-building, and sustainable financial mechanisms are crucial for ensuring the effective long-term implementation of the MoU.

The importance of consistently holding meetings among the signatories is emphasized, alongside the need for monitoring the Action Plan’s implementation to ensure steady progress. Despite challenges such as limited funding and human resources, ongoing dialogue has led to observable advancements. Countries have increasingly collaborated by sharing experiences, good practices, and progress reports.

The Grassland Birds MoU remains an important instrument within the CMS framework. While tangible progress was achieved between 2018 and 2024, ongoing threats underscore the need for stronger implementation, monitoring, and financing. The MOS3 meeting reaffirmed the commitment of all participants to enhancing collaboration, expanding the MoU to new range states and species, and aligning future actions with global biodiversity and climate agendas. Building on this momentum, the effective implementation of the updated Action Plan and continued collaboration among governments, NGOs, and local stakeholders will be essential to ensure the long-term conservation of migratory grassland birds and their habitats across South America.

**ACTION PLAN OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF
SOUTHERN SOUTH AMERICAN MIGRATORY GRASSLAND BIRD SPECIES AND THEIR
HABITATS**

(2025-2029)

(Updated at the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3), December 2024, and at the Second Virtual Meeting on the Action Plan, August 2025)

I. Overall Objective of the Action Plan

To improve the conservation status of migratory grassland bird species and their habitats in southern South America, in breeding, migration, and non-breeding concentration areas.

II. Specific Objectives

1. **Specific Objective 1 - PROTECTION OF GRASSLANDS:** By 2029, ensure that the signatory countries recognize the value of grasslands in terms of their biodiversity, contribution to ecosystem services, and climate resilience, and commit to developing at least one mechanism to promote the protection and sustainable management of grasslands that are important for migratory species and the ecosystem services they provide in the grasslands of South America.
2. **Specific Objective 2 - RESEARCH AND MONITORING:** By 2029, ensure that the signatory countries include in their National Plans the prioritization, facilitation, and funding of state institutions, as well as research and monitoring programs focused on the species listed in the MoU, their habitats, and grassland ecosystems.
3. **Specific Objective 3 - EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION:** By 2029, ensure that the signatory countries commit to facilitating communication and education efforts aligned with the messages of this MoU, in order to raise awareness about the importance of natural grasslands, threatened species, and their ecosystem services.
4. **Specific Objective 4 - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE POLICIES:** By 2029, ensure that the signatory countries commit to outlining a plan of incentives and/or laws and reviewing existing legislation to facilitate good management and conservation practices of natural grasslands, and to promote collaboration with the productive sector and civil society.
5. **Specific Objective 5 - SUSTAINABILITY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION:** By 2029, the signatory countries commit to allocating and mobilizing resources to strengthen international cooperation for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (CAF, GEF, IDB) on the grasslands of South America.

III. Actions of the Specific Objectives

Action	Remarks, Deadlines, Products	Correspondence with the Samarkand SPMS ¹	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1 - PROTECTION OF GRASSLANDS			
1.1	Identify priority grassland areas for the conservation of migratory birds.	<p>Suggested Product: List of priority areas identified for the conservation of migratory birds. [Suggestion to include on the MoU webpage]</p> <p>Indicator: Number of areas identified.</p> <p>Suggested Deadline: 2026.</p> <p>Comment: Consider HCVAs (High Conservation Value Areas), KBAs (Key Biodiversity Areas), WHSRN sites (RHRAP in Spanish), Ramsar Sites, and Focal Sites of the Grassland Alliance that take into account already recognized KBAs and sites.</p>	<p>By 2029, all important habitats for migratory species listed in CMS Appendices are identified, assessed and monitored to ensure their functionality and ability to support migratory species throughout their life cycles.</p> <p>By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p>
1.2	Compile, update, and centralize the available information on priority areas for the conservation of MoU bird species, ensuring regional representativeness and complementarity.	<p>Suggested Products: Technologies available in South America (to be centralized by CMS, identifying institutions capable of carrying this out, and establishing a compilation committee). Avifauna portal.</p> <p>Suggested Deadline: 2027 (with updates in subsequent years).</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p>
1.3	Conduct a gap analysis (GAP) to assess representativeness within the region's system of protected areas.	<p>Suggested Products: Gap analysis comparing the priority areas identified for migratory species with the existing network of protected areas, sites under legally binding international frameworks (Ramsar, World Heritage), and OECMs.</p>	<p>By 2032, all important habitats for migratory species listed in CMS Appendices are protected, effectively conserved, managed and restored through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably</p>

1.4	Implement the protection of priority areas through appropriate mechanisms for the conservation of migratory grassland birds, using national protected area systems, international frameworks (e.g., Ramsar Sites, World Heritage/UNESCO Sites), and Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures (OECMs).	<p>Suggested Products: Incentives implemented in the signatory countries.</p> <p>Comments: Encourage the creation of national and regional protection networks. Include other cultural protection actions — anthropological and cultural work (alternative protection designations). Provide a clearer description of protection categories, such as national protection networks.</p>	governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.
1.5	Identify protected areas that lack management plans addressing the needs of migratory grassland birds or that require updates to incorporate these needs and the ecosystem services provided by such areas.	<p>Suggested Products: List of areas that require management plans or updates, incorporating the needs of migratory grassland birds. A CMS database of protected areas, including their management plans focused on migratory grassland bird species and the ecosystem services they provide. Suggested Deadline: First semester of 2026.</p>	
1.6	Include the needs of migratory grassland birds in the management plans of protected areas within native grassland regions.	<p>Suggested Product: Database from the countries containing the management plans of protected areas that have been developed or updated, indicating whether they address the needs of migratory grassland birds. Indicator for use in protected areas: Grassland Conservation Index.</p>	By 2032, all important habitats for migratory species listed in CMS Appendices are protected, effectively conserved, managed and restored through ecologically representative, well-connected and equitably governed systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures.
1.7	Identify and define conservation and management strategies, including appropriate incentives for the conservation of migratory grassland birds in each country, at subnational and regional levels, to determine the most suitable and effective tools.	<p>Suggested Product: Portfolio of conservation and management strategies, including a list of widely available incentives in each country. Suggested Deadline: 2027 (with updates in subsequent years).</p>	
1.8	Promote, develop, and strengthen evidence-based, bird-friendly best	<p>Suggested Products: E-book of Best Practices for Migratory Grassland Birds in the Southern Cone.</p>	

	management practices (BMPs) for migratory grassland bird habitats.	Compiled, documented, and published information for the CMS COP. Training sessions for technicians and extension agents on Best Management Practices (BMPs) – Establishment of a committee for publication. Comment: Promote the sustainable production agenda. Suggested Deadline: 2029.	
1.9	Promote traditional grassland cultures as a mechanism to support the conservation of migratory grassland birds.	Suggested Products: Chapter in the e-book “ <i>Grassland Cultures</i> ” from Action 1.8, including an overlay map of migratory bird areas and associated cultures. Meetings of producers and livestock farmers during celebrations of traditional grassland cultures (e.g., Grassland Alliance gatherings). Deadline: 2029 (ongoing action).	Parties use best available science, as the basis for evidence-based advice and decision-making to address the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and threats under CMS.
1.10	Develop techniques for using native seeds and forage plants in pastoral systems for the restoration of degraded areas.	Suggested Products: Compilation of information in the <i>e-book</i> (Action 1.8) on best management practices and the use of native seeds and forage species. Creation of a network of available grassland seed banks. Suggested Deadline: 2029.	By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions. By 2032, the negative impacts of invasive alien species on migratory species and their habitats are reduced or eliminated.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2 - RESEARCH AND MONITORING			
2.1	Hold a regional workshop to standardize monitoring methodologies.	Suggested Products: Compilation of information on existing monitoring methods and programs, and preparation of a comparative analysis as a first step.	Parties use best available science, as the basis for evidence-based advice and decision-making to address the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and threats under CMS. By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.

2.2	Develop distribution maps and niche modeling for the MoU species.		By 2029, all important habitats for migratory species listed in CMS Appendices are identified, assessed and monitored to ensure their functionality and ability to support migratory species throughout their life cycles.
2.3	Improve knowledge of the species' natural history (e.g., minimum area requirements).	Comment: Include studies on migration routes and connectivity.	By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.
2.4	Conduct demographic studies and assess changes in species abundance over time	Comment: Baseline data are very important for assessing the conservation status of species.	
2.5	Carry out studies to build evidence-based knowledge on the effectiveness of different management techniques (fire, resting, grazing pressure, afforestation, agriculture) for the conservation of MoU species and the improvement of production.		
2.6	Develop studies on the impact of invasive alien species on birds and their habitats, and identify control measures.		
2.7	Investigate the importance of roadside verges and corridors along highways and rural roads, as well as biological corridors within productive ecosystems, for the conservation of native grasslands.	Comment: Include biological corridors within productive ecosystems.	By 2032, the negative impacts of invasive alien species on migratory species and their habitats are reduced or eliminated.
2.8	Develop a coordinated, network-based project integrating bird monitoring programs across signatory countries, to be implemented regionally for MoU species, contributing to an international grassland bird index adopted as a	Expected Product: International Bird Index. Comment: Prioritization, facilitation, and financing by state institutions of research and monitoring programs for MoU species, their habitats, and grassland ecosystems — developed collaboratively as a group effort.	By 2032, the direct mortality of migratory species caused by humanmade infrastructure is significantly reduced to levels that are not harmful to species' viability.
			By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidencebased guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.

	measure to monitor land-use sustainability.		<p>By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions</p> <p>By 2029, the conservation status of all migratory species is reviewed regularly, informing priorities for conservation and management action.</p>
2.9	Promote and support citizen science initiatives for monitoring grassland birds, in collaboration with academia, government ministries, and other institutions, using supervised platforms such as eBird, WikiAves, etc.		<p>By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p> <p>By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p>
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3 - EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION			
3.1	Develop and implement educational campaigns to discourage the illegal trade of grassland songbird species.		<p>By 2032, any take, use and trade of migratory species listed in CMS Appendices is sustainable, safe and legal, overexploitation is prevented, risk of pathogen spillover is reduced and negative impacts on non-target species and their ecosystems are minimized.</p> <p>By 2026, awareness of the importance of migratory species and their role in providing benefits for people has increased globally.</p>
3.2	Carry out educational and awareness-raising actions on the importance and value of grasslands, particularly at primary/elementary school levels.		By 2026, awareness of the importance of migratory species and their role in providing benefits for people has increased globally.
3.3	Disseminate guidance on evidence-based interventions for the sustainable (bird-friendly) management of		By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to

	grasslands among professionals, including through meetings with the agricultural sector.		effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.
3.4	Design and implement communication strategies for grassland conservation (with clearly defined objectives) targeting landowners and managers, decision-makers, businesses, financial institutions, local communities, and the general public.	<p>Comments: Economic sectors should also include real estate, tourism, and others. Protected area managers should also be included among the target audiences, as grazing and fire can serve as management tools for grasslands.</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p> <p>By 2026, awareness of the importance of migratory species and their role in providing benefits for people has increased globally.</p>
3.5	Promote and support the organization of symposia on grassland and bird conservation, highlighting research priorities on threats and solutions, during national and international ornithological meetings and other relevant sectoral events.		
3.6	Organize at least one event during the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 with the theme of ecosystem connectivity, and continue with complementary messaging in other regional or international activities.	<p>Comments: The goal is to raise awareness about the ecosystem connectivity of grasslands through migratory species. The idea is to organize multiple events, including coordinated events among countries. Possible events: regional livestock producers' meetings, CMS COP15 – Brazil, International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026 – Mongolia (e.g., CMS Grasslands MoU side event).</p>	
3.7	Strengthen prevention, surveillance, and response to avian influenza (HPAI) in grassland birds through a communication plan based on the One Health approach, promoting coordination among sectors (animal health, public health, and environment), raising awareness in local communities, and fostering international cooperation.	<p>Comments: Consider including OMSA–FAO–WAHIS. Reference supporting document generated by CMS COP14: <i>Migratory Species and Health</i> — https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/document/cms_cop14_inf.30.4.3_e_0.pdf.</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p> <p>By 2029, Parties have the technical capacity needed to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p>

			By 2032, any take, use and trade of migratory species listed in CMS Appendices is sustainable, safe and legal, overexploitation is prevented, risk of pathogen spillover is reduced and negative impacts on non-target species and their ecosystems are minimized.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4 - PUBLIC AND PRIVATE POLICIES			
4.1	Each signatory country's government shall develop, implement, or regulate at least one normative measure, at any level of governance, for the conservation of grasslands in non-protected areas.	<p>Comments:</p> <p>Recommendations for each National Plan:</p> <p>Bolivia: Approve Land Use Management Plans (<i>Planes de Ordenamiento Predial</i>) that include Private Natural Heritage Reserves.</p> <p>Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil: Regulate the existing laws using the Grassland Conservation Index (GCI).</p> <p>Paraguay: Review the resolution on incentives for grasslands to include livestock producers and modify the compensation mechanism.</p> <p>Uruguay: Support the law on incentives for the conservation of natural grasslands, recognizing and using the Grassland Conservation Index as a tool to measure contributions to the conservation of ecosystem services — with the possibility of using the Grassland Alliance technological platform as a national database.</p>	By 2029, Parties have mechanisms in place, including national legislation and enforcement mechanisms where relevant, to fully implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.
4.2	Establish working groups to include the needs of migratory birds and grasslands in the Land Use Planning of each signatory country, in line with the MoU.	<p>Comment:</p> <p>Land-use planning should encompass all natural areas and incorporate, for example, fire management (or any other activity) within a landscape-level planning framework, not limited to the property level. Another example is the inclusion of biological corridors between properties, which should form an integral part of the Land-Use Plan.</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.</p> <p>By 2032, CMS provisions are included in relevant national planning processes and policies for the benefit of migratory species and the ecosystem services they provide.</p>

4.3	Monitor the impact of grain monocultures, exotic pastures, and forestry plantations on MoU species and their habitats, so that these effects are considered in the public policies of each signatory country.		<p>Parties use best available science, as the basis for evidence-based advice and decision-making to address the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and threats under CMS.</p> <p>By 2032, the negative impacts of invasive alien species on migratory species and their habitats are reduced or eliminated.</p>
4.4	In each signatory country, develop and enforce regulations on invasive alien species in grassland regions (e.g., wild boar, pine, eucalyptus, forage species), including along road and highway verges.		<p>By 2032, the negative impacts of invasive alien species on migratory species and their habitats are reduced or eliminated.</p> <p>By 2032, the direct mortality of migratory species caused by humanmade infrastructure is significantly reduced to levels that are not harmful to species' viability.</p>
4.5	Increase control and surveillance through the development and implementation of enforcement and monitoring programs addressing the capture and illegal trade of species covered under the MoU.		By 2032, any take, use and trade of migratory species listed in CMS Appendices is sustainable, safe and legal, overexploitation is prevented, risk of pathogen spillover is reduced and negative impacts on non-target species and their ecosystems are minimized.
4.6	Develop and implement Communication Plans based on social diagnostics, stakeholder analysis, and mapping (including the productive sector, civil society, among others).		By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.
4.7	Develop and implement financial incentives for grassland conservation, such as lines of credit for good practices,		By 2029, Parties have mobilized or secured resources to implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.

	payment for ecosystem services, eco-friendly products, and environmental certification.		
4.8	Promote the integration of the MoU into National Plans and other instruments related to conservation, protection, and production in each signatory country, engaging civil society and other stakeholders in its implementation.	<p>Comments:</p> <p>Each signatory country should use its own tools to strengthen internal integration — National Action Plans are suggested (e.g., Action Plans for Threatened Species, Invasive Species, Grasslands, or Protected Areas).</p> <p>An intermediate evaluation of the MoU Plan would help engage stakeholders.</p>	By 2032, CMS provisions are included in relevant national planning processes and policies for the benefit of migratory species and the ecosystem services they provide.
4.9	Explore and support strategies in grassland areas for tourism, birdwatching, citizen science, ornamental plants, and/or other uses that promote grassland conservation.	<p>Expected Products:</p> <p>Systematization of existing initiatives — first step.</p> <p>Collaboration with the Ministries or Secretariats of Tourism, Livestock/Agriculture, Education, and Environment, as well as regional governments, to strengthen the integration of grasslands into tourism.</p>	
4.10	Recognize sustainable livestock production in natural grasslands as a Nature-based Solution (NbS) and develop at least one fiscal or incentive mechanism to ensure its competitiveness compared to more profitable but less sustainable activities (e.g., extensive grain monocultures and exotic forestry plantations).		<p>By 2032, the loss, degradation and fragmentation of important habitats for migratory species listed in CMS Appendices is reduced, and habitats are restored to ensure that such habitats support their viability.</p> <p>Parties use best available science, as the basis for evidence-based advice and decision-making to address the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and threats under CMS.</p>
4.11	Acknowledge, promote, and incorporate good conservation management practices in private reserves.	<p>Comments:</p> <p>For example: Bolivia – Private Natural Heritage Reserves.</p> <p>Uruguay – Recognition of the private reserve framework has also been approved.</p> <p>Brazil – RPPNs (Private Natural Heritage Reserves): the creation process is very lengthy; there is a need to streamline and facilitate the establishment of new private reserves.</p>	

		Important observation: Buffer zones around protected areas and biological corridors can serve as facilitators in the process of creating private reserves in the signatory countries.	
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5 - SUSTAINABILITY AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION			
5.1	Promote the coordinated use of a standardized grassland health index—such as components of the Grassland Conservation Index (GCI – <i>Sistema Pastizal</i>)—for monitoring and evaluating the actions foreseen under the MoU among all signatories.		<p>By 2029, the conservation status of all migratory species is reviewed regularly, informing priorities for conservation and management action.</p> <p>Parties use best available science, as the basis for evidence-based advice and decision-making to address the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and threats under CMS.</p>
5.2	Develop and support tools and instruments to facilitate the implementation of coordinated South–North actions.	<p>Comments: Existing instruments and tools: The Payeras Plan (species-level plans, e.g., <i>Calidris subruficollis</i>) should be considered, along with its interfaces and synergies. There is potential to develop a specific plan for <i>C. subruficollis</i> under the MoU. A tangible product from this action could be achieved within the next two years. Conservation Plan for Buff-breasted Sandpiper (<i>Calidris subruficollis</i>) – 2010. Include avian influenza considerations — international collaboration mechanisms and platforms (a coordinated North–South action to address HPAI). Mid-Continent Initiative: https://midamericashorebirds.org/es Strategic Framework: https://midamericashorebirds.org/es/recursos</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.</p> <p>By 2032, provisions that support CMS are included and strengthened in other relevant international instruments, policies and initiatives, and in the strategic priorities of relevant stakeholders for the benefit of migratory species.</p>

		Southern Cone Grassland Conservation Investment Plan. CITES – combating the illegal wildlife trade.	
5.3	Promote interaction between the MoU and the livestock sector, including agricultural agencies.		By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.
5.4	Explore the potential of grasslands to contribute to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets.		By 2032, CMS provisions are included in relevant national planning processes and policies for the benefit of migratory species and the ecosystem services they provide.
5.5	Coordinate common actions and management protocols for protected areas through national focal points of the Red Parques network.		By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.
5.6	Support the long-term financial viability of the MoU through the adoption of a business plan approach.	Products: Diagnosis. Resource Mobilization Plan. Conservation Investment Plan (instead of Business Plan). Conservation Investment Strategy. Deadlines: Diagnosis: 2026 (COP15 – opportunity for working meetings on the topic). All actions: 2027.	By 2029, Parties have mobilized or secured resources to implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.
5.7	Strengthen cooperation and exchange of experiences between regional grassland bird initiatives (such as the Trilateral Committee for Wildlife and Ecosystem Conservation and Management) and the Memorandum of Understanding.	Comment: The Trilateral Committee - United States, Canada, and Mexico.	By 2032, provisions that support CMS are included and strengthened in other relevant international instruments, policies and initiatives, and in the strategic priorities of relevant stakeholders for the benefit of migratory species.

5.8	Identify international funding sources and incentives to facilitate the implementation of the MoU (e.g., CAF, IDB, GEF, American Flyways Initiative).		By 2029, Parties have mobilized or secured resources to implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.
5.9	Create a platform/scientific database compiling implementation tools, products, and information from the MoU Action Plan across all South American countries to support follow-up and share key data with governments, thereby facilitating the development of legislation and public policies.	<p>Product: Platform available on the MoU website.</p>	<p>By 2029, Parties have access to relevant information and evidence-based guidance to effectively implement the Convention, its Resolutions and Decisions.</p> <p>By 2029, Parties work collaboratively with other governments on actions and initiatives to implement CMS, its Resolutions and Decisions and associated guidance.</p> <p>By 2032, CMS provisions are included in relevant national planning processes and policies for the benefit of migratory species and the ecosystem services they provide.</p>

¹ Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species 2024-2032 (SPMS) - UNEP/CMS/Resolution 14.1 - <https://www.cms.int/en/document/samarkand-strategic-plan-migratory-species-2024-2032>.

IV. General Comments on the Action Plan

During the meetings held to update this Action Plan, participants provided both specific comments on concrete objectives and general observations regarding the plan as a whole. The main ideas are summarized below.

It was noted that several limiting factors persist, such as the absence of public incentives, the lack of official recognition of key conservation areas (e.g., KBA, WHSRN), and the absence of effective policies for the sustainable management of grasslands. Participants also highlighted legal contradictions, including regulations that promote productive activities incompatible with conservation objectives (for example, incentives for afforestation with exotic species), creating regulatory conflicts and institutional confusion. Consequently, an in-depth review of such policies is required to ensure coherence with international environmental standards.

It is essential that governments recognize the value of grasslands, both in terms of biodiversity and ecosystem services, such as climate change mitigation. However, unlike forests, grasslands are often perceived solely as productive or sacrificial lands, which limits the development of appropriate public policies. Since most of these areas are privately owned, it is imperative to design effective incentives and awareness programs and to rethink communication strategies, prioritizing economic and socio-productive arguments that are more persuasive for governments and local stakeholders. Sustainability must incorporate the socioeconomic dimension, with sustainable livestock production identified as a key ally. It is also necessary to define more precisely what constitutes “Good Management Practices” (GMPs) and to promote their implementation through incentives, technical support, and outreach by governments, scientific institutions, and public universities. The adoption of such practices would strengthen migratory bird habitats and generate productive and social benefits. Strategic pathways include consolidating governmental incentives for grassland conservation, implementing tools such as the Grassland Conservation Index (GCI), and promoting birds as indicators of land-use sustainability, following examples like the European Union’s Wild Bird Index.

The importance of establishing and strengthening partnerships with existing networks and initiatives related to grassland conservation was also recognized. In this regard, participants emphasized the need to increase the visibility of the work carried out by BirdLife and its partners, reinforce coordination with the Mid-Continental Flyway Network, and align efforts with the Shorebird Action Plan to ensure coherence and synergy in implementation at the hemispheric level.

It was further emphasized that the objectives of the Action Plan should be refined and transformed into SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound) to ensure clear, assessable, and realistic goals aligned with priorities and defined timelines. The importance of assigning specific responsibilities, defining implementation mechanisms, and facilitating execution was also underscored, following the example of national plans that already designate actors and specific actions.

Participants recommended designating more than one national focal point—including government entities, NGOs, research centers, and academia—creating country-level working groups, and mapping key institutions. Likewise, the development of National Action Plans with specific measures that contribute coherently to the Regional Plan was suggested.

The mid-term evaluation of the Plan was considered a key tool to engage relevant stakeholders. It was proposed to organize at least one annual meeting, including virtual formats, as well as preparatory meetings before CMS plenary sessions to review documents, identify needs, and process information in advance, ensuring better preparation.

Given that the MoU lacks binding force, participants raised the need to explore mechanisms that could enhance its enforceability or at least strengthen its capacity to support governments, taking as reference more binding agreements such as ACAP (Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels). Within this framework, the creation of an Action Plan Follow-up Committee was suggested to strengthen links with governments and promote more effective coordination.

Finally, participants highlighted the priority of updating the list of bird species and reviewing the text of the Memorandum of Understanding to ensure its continued relevance and alignment with the current context.