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RAPTORS MOU

FOURTH MEETING OF SIGNATORIES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS OF PREY IN AFRICA AND EURASIA

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GLOBAL ACTION PLAN FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE STEPPE EAGLE (*Aquila nipalensis*) (2026–2035): PROGRESS AND IMPLEMENTATION PRIORITIES

(Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU)

Summary: This document reports on progress in supporting implementation of the Global Action Plan for the Conservation of the Steppe Eagle (SEGAP) following its adoption by CMS COP15, including communication and outreach activities, and outlines coordination and resource needs.

The Meeting of Signatories is invited to take note of progress, encourage implementation of relevant priority actions by Signatories that are Range States, and support coordination and resource mobilisation.

1. The steppe eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*) is listed on Appendices I and II of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and in Annex 1 of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU), where it is classified as a Category 1 species in Table 1 of the Action Plan (Annex 3). According to the SEGAP, the species has declined by around 50 per cent over three generations, has been classified as Endangered since 2015, and is considered likely to number 30,000 breeding pairs or fewer.

2. Paragraph 8(a) of the Raptors MOU calls on Signatories to establish and implement effective strategies and action plans for the conservation of birds of prey and their habitats. Paragraph 12 further provides that Signatories will aim to prepare and submit to the Coordinating Unit, where appropriate, national or regional strategies or equivalent documents such, including Single Species Action Plans, for Category 1 and, where appropriate, Category 2 species listed in Table 1 of the Action Plan.

3. At the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3, Dubai, 3–6 July 2023), the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) identified the steppe eagle as a priority species with gaps in species action planning. The Coordinating Unit (CU) also reported that it had circulated a survey to explore developing an action plan for the species (document UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS3/Report/Rev1, paragraphs 27 and 95). The Meeting further emphasised the importance of implementing Single Species Action Plans (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS3/Report/Annex XIII, paragraph 13).

4. At its 14th Meeting (COP14, Samarkand, February 2024), the Conference of the Parties to CMS recognised the urgent need for international cooperation to conserve the steppe eagle. Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP14) Action Plans for Birds and related Decision 14.145 encouraged Parties, non-Parties, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders to make rapid progress in developing a Single Species Action Plan for submission to COP15. The Plan was subsequently adopted by COP15 in March 2026, as described below.

5. In response, the CMS Secretariat, through the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU and in collaboration with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB, United Kingdom), with financial support from The Earthshot Prize and UK International Development from the UK government, developed the Global Action Plan for the Conservation of the Steppe Eagle 2026-2035 (SEGAP). A core group of experts from across the species' range was established to support development of the Plan, following a call circulated to all Range States on 8 April 2025. An expert workshop held in Astana, Kazakhstan, in May 2025 developed the problem tree, threat ranking and conservation action framework that informed the Plan[1].

6. The SEGAP aims to halt and reverse the decline of the steppe eagle through science-based conservation and community engagement across its range. It sets out six goals:

   a) reduce the impact of energy infrastructure on steppe eagles along the flyway;
   b) reduce significantly mortality due to the impact of legal and illegal take and trade;
   c) understand and reduce the impact of unintentional poisoning on steppe eagle populations;
   d) attain good quality habitats that support populations of steppe eagle across the species' range;
   e) address key knowledge gaps on steppe eagle distribution, movement and threats

[1] https://raptors.cms.int/news/experts-convene-kazakhstan-identify-conservation-solutions-endangered-steppe-eagle

through increased collaboration and coordinated research, to inform conservation action across its global range; and

f) ensure endorsement and effective implementation of the SEGAP across all Range States through outreach with key communities and all major stakeholders.

7. The SEGAP is relevant to the Initiative for the Central Asian Flyway (CAF), established through CMS Resolution 14.13, which provides opportunities for regional cooperation in implementing the Plan. Implementation of the SEGAP extends across the species' range, including areas beyond the CAF.

Adoption of the Global Action Plan by CMS COP15

8. The SEGAP was submitted to the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP15, Campo Grande, Brazil, 23–29 March 2026) in document UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.4.3, with the full Plan made available as information document UNEP/CMS/COP15/Inf.26.4.3. COP15 adopted the SEGAP through paragraph 3 of Resolution 12.12 (UNEP/CMS/Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15)) *Action Plans for Birds*. Paragraph 6 of the Resolution urges Parties and invites non-Party Range States to implement the relevant provisions of adopted action plans. The full SEGAP is also available to MOS4 as information document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.15a.

9. The Plan recommends convening a Steppe Eagle Working Group of experts, meeting at least annually, to review available information and research, assess implementation progress in Range States, plan priority actions and support delivery of the conservation action framework. The Terms of Reference of the Working Group are being drafted, and the group has not been formally established yet.

10. The Plan provides for a Mid-Term Implementation Review in 2030 and recommends the appointment of an Action Plan Coordinator to support its implementation.

11. Annex 1 presents indicative resource requirements for the coordination and selected implementation activities of the SEGAP for 2027–2029, drawing on Activity 1.1.29 of the CMS Programme of work for the intersessional period between COP15 and COP16 (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Resolution 15.1/Rev.2/Annex 6). These requirements include a part-time Action Plan Coordinator, travel and support for implementation through implementing partners. Inclusion in the Programme of Work does not imply that funding has been secured. Signatories and partners are invited to explore financial and in-kind contributions, including possible secondment or hosting arrangements, subject to applicable administrative requirements.

Activities undertaken since COP15

Side event at COP15

12. On 24 March 2026, the Coordinating Unit organized a side event at COP15 entitled "One species, 62 Range States: Launching the Global Action Plan for the Conservation of the iconic Steppe Eagle". Presentations covered the main threats to the species and the priority actions identified in the Plan. Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia presented their national conservation efforts and discussed opportunities to support SEGAP implementation. The discussion also highlighted linkages with the CAF. The presentations are available on the SEGAP webpage.

Dedicated webpage

13. A dedicated webpage has been created on the Raptors MOU website, providing access to the full Plan, its summaries, communication materials and information on events related to the SEGAP.

Translations, summaries and fact sheets

14. To facilitate implementation in key Range States, the full Plan is available in English, Kazakh and Russian, and summaries of the Plan have been produced in English, Arabic, Kazakh and Russian. The summaries are available on the SEGAP webpage and are also available to MOS4 as information document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.15b. A Steppe Eagle Factsheet is also available in English and Russian on the SEGAP webpage and as MOS4 information document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.19; Arabic, and Kazakh translations are being finalised.

Stakeholder fact sheets

15. To help stakeholders identify their contributions to SEGAP implementation, the Coordinating Unit is preparing a series of stakeholder fact sheets. Each sheet summarises the species' conservation status and threats, the Plan's six goals, and the Critical or High priority actions for which the stakeholder group is identified in the Plan, including their geographical scope and timeframe.

    Fact sheets are being prepared for eight stakeholder groups:

    (a) national authorities responsible for wildlife management;
    (b) national authorities responsible for energy;
    (c) waste management authorities;
    (d) academic institutions and research agencies;
    (e) conservation non-governmental organizations;
    (f) energy utilities and electricity companies;
    (g) relevant international mechanisms and authorities; and
    (h) the SEGAP Working Group.

    Group (g) includes the CMS Energy Task Force, The Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT), The South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (SWA ITB TF), Asia Pacific Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force (ITTEA) and the CMS Secretariat, as well as national CITES management and scientific authorities.

Online launch of the Plan

16. On 23 June 2026, the Coordinating Unit hosted an online webinar to launch the SEGAP. The webinar presented the main threats facing the steppe eagle and the Plan's priority actions, with contributions from Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia and India on national conservation efforts and implementation priorities. The recording is available on the SEGAP webpage.

Workshop in Bulgaria

17. The Coordinating Unit contributed to a workshop organized by RSPB in Bulgaria on 28–

30 October 2026, which aimed to develop project proposals supporting the implementation of the SEGAP. An oral report of the meeting will be given at MOS4.

Discussion and analysis

18. The adoption of the SEGAP by CMS COP15 marks an important milestone in international cooperation for the conservation of the steppe eagle, providing a framework for coordinated action across the 62 countries and territories covered by the Plan. As a Category 1 species under the Raptors MOU, the steppe eagle is a priority for conservation action. Effective implementation of the SEGAP supports the objectives of the MOU and its Action Plan and can inform national or regional conservation strategies and relevant species action plans under paragraph 12 of the MOU.

19. The available summaries and species fact sheet, together with the stakeholder fact sheets being prepared, are intended to help national authorities, the energy and waste management sectors, the research community and civil society identify relevant SEGAP actions. Signatories are encouraged to disseminate the available materials nationally and use them to inform implementation priorities and project proposals.

20. Priorities for the coming years are to secure the resources for an Action Plan Coordinator, support the SEGAP Working Group and advance implementation of the Plan's Critical and High-priority actions, particularly those with near-term deadlines. Integrating relevant SEGAP actions into national raptor conservation strategies, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), and the work of the CAF initiative, the CMS Energy Task Force and relevant task forces on illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds would support coordinated delivery by Range States and partners.

Recommended actions

21. The Meeting of Signatories is invited to:

    a) take note of this document and of progress supporting the coordination and implementation of the SEGAP;

    b) welcome the adoption of the SEGAP by CMS COP15 and thank the RSPB for its contribution to developing the Plan, and The Earthshot Prize and UK International Development from the UK government for their financial support;

    c) encourage Signatories that are Range States of the Steppe Eagle to identify and implement relevant priority actions under the SEGAP, integrate these into appropriate national strategies and planning processes, including NBSAPs, and disseminate available implementation materials to relevant national stakeholder;

    d) invite Signatories that are Range States of the steppe eagle to identify suitable experts to contribute to the SEGAP Working Group, once the call for nominations will be circulated by the Coordinating Unit;

    e) invite Signatories that are Range States of the steppe eagle to include information on relevant SEGAP activities and implementation needs in their national reports to the Raptors MOU, using the applicable reporting arrangements;

    f) invite Signatories, Cooperating Partners and other donors in a position to do so to indicate, during the present Meeting or in writing to the Coordinating Unit, the financial or in-kind support they may provide for the priority needs identified in Annex 1, and request the Coordinating Unit, subject to available capacity and

resources, to facilitate targeted follow-up with interested contributors, including a donor discussion where useful;

g) request the Coordinating Unit to report to MOS5 on SEGAP coordination arrangements, support mobilised and implementation progress reported by Range States and partners.

ANNEX 1

Indicative resource requirements for SEGAP coordination and selected implementation activities, 2027–2029 (EUR)

Based on Activity 1.1.29 of the CMS Programme of Work for the intersessional period between COP15 and COP16 (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Resolution 15.1/Rev.2/Annex 6)

Activity 1.1.29 - Steppe Eagle Global Action Plan: Coordinate, convene Range States meeting and implement priority actions

Mandate: Action Plan, Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15)

Object of expenditure	**Years**			**Total (€)**
	2027 (€)	**2028 (€)**	**2029 (€)**	
Part-time Coordinator	25,000	25,000	25,000	75,000
Travel	5,000	5,000	5,000	15,000
Meeting (incl. participants travel)	30,000			30,000
Grants / consultancies	30,000		30,000	60,000
Programme Suport Costs 13%	11,700	3,900	7,800	23,400
Total funds required	**101,700**	**33,900**	**67,800**	**203,400**