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CMS

RAPTORS MOU

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

(Victoria Falls, 30 November- 2 December 2026)

UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.9

REPORT OF THE COORDINATING UNIT

(Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU)

Summary:

This document reports on the activities of the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU from the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3, Dubai, July 2023) to October 2026. It reviews progress against the Coordinating Unit Workplan 2024–2026, summarized in Annex 1 to this document, and outlines proposed priorities for 2027–2029.

The Meeting of Signatories is invited to take note of the report, provide guidance on the proposed priorities for 2027–2029 and support the recommended actions on National Contact Points and outreach to non-signatory Range States.

1. The Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU operates within the CMS Office – Abu Dhabi, which is hosted by the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates. EAD has generously provided core funding financial and in-kind support to the Office, including the Raptors Coordinating Unit, since 2009.

2. This report summarizes the work of the Coordinating Unit since the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3, Dubai, 3–6 July 2023) up to October 2026. It follows the structure of the Report of the Coordinating Unit to MOS3 (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS3/Doc.9). During this period the Coordinating Unit assisted Signatories in implementing the MOU and its Action Plan; serviced the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF); facilitated coordination and implementation of the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan and other species action plans; prepared the Raptors MOU contributions to CMS COP14 (Samarkand, Uzbekistan, February 2024) and COP15 (Campo Grande, Brazil, March 2026); and prepared for MOS4. Progress against the Workplan 2024–2026 presented to MOS3 is summarized in Annex 1 to this document.

Personnel and capacity of the Coordinating Unit

3. The Coordinating Unit is led by of a Programme Management Officer (P4), supported by an Associate Programme Management Officer (P2) shared with the Dugong MOU Secretariat. It also benefits from the support of the Executive Coordinator, who heads the CMS Office – Abu Dhabi, and shared administrative and finance services, complemented by interns and short-term consultants. The following staffing changes took place during the reporting period:

    a. The Associate Programme Management Officer who had supported the Unit since April 2022 transferred to the CITES Secretariat in Geneva on 8 November 2024. Her successor assumed her function on 5 December 2025, following a vacancy of approximately 13 months;

    b. An internship programme for the Raptors MOU was launched in early 2024. Interns have supported the Coordinating Unit both in Abu Dhabi and remotely from Bulgaria, China, Egypt, Estonia, India, Italy, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. Additional calls for interns were issued in 2025 and 2026, specifically to support MOS4 preparations and data management;

    c. The Programme Management Officer leading the Coordinating Unit is due to retire on 31 December 2026. Recruitment of a successor began in the third quarter of 2026 and is under way.

4. Despite these transitions, the Coordinating Unit continued to deliver its core functions, with support from interns and consultants in servicing Signatories and the MOU's technical bodies.

5. The financial forecast for the CMS Office - Abu Dhabi indicates a funding gap for the Raptors MOU Coordinator post in 2027, creating a risk to continuity of the Unit's coordination functions. EAD has been informed of the broader funding pressures facing the Office. Details of the Coordinator funding gap and proposed funding scenarios are presented in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.16.1.

Status of signatures and promotion of the MOU

6. The number of Signatories increased from 61 at MOS3 to 66 during the reporting period, comprising 65 countries and the European Union. Five countries joined during this period:

   a. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan signed the MOU at a ceremony held during CMS COP14 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan, in February 2024;

   b. Uganda became the 65th Signatory to the MOU at a signing ceremony in Kampala on 19 March 2025, followed by a national raptor conservation workshop organized by the Coordinating Unit;

   c. Zimbabwe became the 66th Signatory in May 2025, signing the MOU during a Southern African Development Community (SADC) Ministerial Meeting in Harare, and subsequently offered to host MOS4.

7. Algeria has expressed interest in signing the MOU; no date for a signing ceremony had been confirmed at the time of writing this report. The Coordinating Unit also held discussions on joining the MOU with Bahrain, Bangladesh, Georgia, Montenegro, Namibia, North Macedonia, Qatar, the United Republic of Tanzania and Türkiye, and promoted the MOU in Central Asia and North Africa through dedicated meetings and workshops. All five new Signatories were from Central Asia and Africa, the priority regions for outreach identified at MOS3.

8. The New Signatories have designated National Contact Points (NCPs). The Coordinating Unit maintains the NCP database and webpage[1]. Formal written confirmation from the competent authorities remains outstanding for 12 NCP designations, which are marked with an asterisk (*) on the webpage.

MOS3 follow-up and preparations for MOS4

9. MOS3 was attended by over 120 participants representing 35 Signatories, Cooperating Partners and other stakeholders. The Meeting amended the MOU text, adopted an updated Action Plan, expanded the species list in Annex 1 to the MOU to 94 species, and adopted an updated List of Sites in Table 3 of Annex 3. The MOS3 report (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS3/Report/Rev.1) was circulated to participants for comment and published in English and French.

10. A call for expressions of interest to host MOS4 was sent to all Signatories on 24 July 2024. The Coordinating Unit subsequently approached several Signatories and explored opportunities to hold MOS4 alongside other CMS meetings. Zimbabwe confirmed that it would host MOS4 in Victoria Falls from 30 November to 2 December 2026. MOS4 is scheduled to be followed by a joint CMS/UNCCD meeting on Land Degradation Neutrality targets (3–4 December 2026) and a meeting of the joint CMS/CITES African Carnivores Initiative (7–9 December 2026). The Government of Zimbabwe signed the Host Country Agreement in August 2026.

11. A MOS4 webpage and an online registration platform were launched to provide meeting information and documents and facilitate participant registration. The Coordinating Unit published the provisional agenda, the overview of progress in implementing the Action

[1] https://raptors.cms.int/national-contact-points-raptors-mou

Plan and the proposed amendments to Annexes 1 and 3 of the MOU on the meeting webpage in accordance with the applicable Rules of Procedure. Registration for delegates requesting financial support closed on 30 September 2026.

12. BirdLife International, the IUCN Red List Authority for birds and manager of the Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas database, provided technical support through a contracted agreement for the preparation of the second Conservation Status Assessment Report, the Site Network Analysis, and analyses informing proposed amendments to Annex 1 and Tables 1 and 3 of Annex 3 to the MOU with review by the TAG and the Coordinating Unit. Related documents submitted to MOS4 include:

    a. Site Network Analysis for priority species (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.12.3);
    b. Second Conservation Status Assessment (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.12.4);
    c. Proposed amendments to Annex 1 (Species List) and Table 1 of Annex 3 (Action Plan) of the Raptors MOU (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.1);
    d. Proposed Amendments to Annex 3 Table 3: List of Internationally Important Sites for Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.3); and
    e. Proposed Approach to Reviewing and Updating Table 3 of Annex 3 to the Raptors MOU (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.4).

13. Other substantive items prepared for MOS4 include: a scoping paper, prepared in cooperation with the COP-appointed Scientific Councillor for Birds, assessing options for extending the MOU's geographic scope to additional countries in East and Southeast Asia and, under a wider option, Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.5); and a proposal to establish a Raptor Flight Safety Working Group, with coordination by the Netherlands proposed (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.6).

CMS COP14 and COP15

14. The Coordinating Unit prepared the Raptors MOU contributions to CMS COP14 (Samarkand, 12–17 February 2024) and COP15 (Campo Grande, 23–29 March 2026). Relevant scientific proposals and draft technical documents were considered by the Sessional Committee of the CMS Scientific Council at its Sixth Meeting (ScC-SC6, Bonn, 18–22 July 2023) ahead of COP14 and its Eighth Meeting (ScC-SC8, Bonn, 15–18 December 2025) ahead of COP15. The main outcomes were:

    a. **Vultures:** COP14 amended Resolution 12.10 (Rev.COP14) and adopted Decisions 14.148–14.155, including Decision 14.155 on the Vulture MsAP Working Group. COP15 adopted Decisions 15.170–15.172 following consideration of the progress report UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.6;

    b. **Saker falcon:** COP14 amended Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14), renewing the mandate of the STF. COP15 further amended the Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP15), considered the proposed Decision-Making System for harvest quotas and adopted Decisions 15.173–15.174 on monitoring, review of the SakerGAP, regional workshops and renewal of STF membership, with the Secretariat's workshop and review activities subject to available resources;

c. **Sooty falcon:** COP14 requested intersessional consideration of the International Single Species Action Plan. The Plan was subsequently adopted by StC56, an outcome acknowledged in Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15) Action Plans for Birds;

d. **Steppe eagle:** COP15 adopted the Steppe Eagle Global Action Plan (SEGAP) through Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15) Action Pans for Birds;

e. **Internationally Important Raptor Areas (IIRAs):** COP15 adopted Resolution 15.10 and Decisions 15.175–15.178. The Resolution establishes IIRAs, including the sites already listed in Table 3 of Annex 3 to the Raptors MOU, and supports their further identification and conservation. It also invites consideration of the approach in other flyways through the CMS Flyways Working Group (see UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.3);

f. **Snowy owl:** COP15 included the Snowy Owl in CMS Appendix II, following a proposal by Norway supported by the Raptors MOU and the TAG (see UNEP/CMS/COP15/Report, Annex 1).

15. The Coordinating Unit organized or co-organized side events at COP14 and COP15 covering the Vulture MsAP and the potential application of its approach in the Americas; belief-based use of vultures; the Steppe Eagle and Saker Falcon action plans; sooty falcon conservation; and “Hidden Poisons”, addressing lead and veterinary non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Technical Advisory Group

16. The Coordinating Unit continued to service the TAG, working with its Chair to organize meetings, prepare and circulate documents, facilitate delivery of the TAG Work Plan and maintain its webpage[2]. Six TAG meetings were held during the reporting period: TAG6 (online, 9 January 2024); TAG7 (online, 27 March 2024); TAG8 (online, 10 September 2024); TAG9 (Extremadura, Spain, 18–20 February 2025), hosted by Spain; TAG10 (online, 19 February 2026); and TAG11 (online, 25 August 2026). Discussions covered allocation of Workplan tasks, biogeographic populations of listed species, progress under the Workplan and options for extending the MOU’s geographical scope. TAG11 reviewed the proposed amendments to Annexes 1 and 3 to the MOU and the draft technical documents prepared for MOS4, including the second Conservation Status Assessment Report, the Site Network Analysis and the document on Internationally Important Raptor Areas (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.3).

17. The TAG also issued a position statement expressing concern about the proposed transfer of the Peregrine Falcon from CITES Appendix I to Appendix II, citing limited data on several subspecies and concerns about the effects of highly pathogenic avian influenza. The proposal, submitted by Canada and the United States of America, was not adopted at CITES CoP20. A full account is given in the TAG report (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.10).

18. On 21 May 2026, the Coordinating Unit launched a call for nominations for the eight TAG positions whose terms end at MOS4. In accordance with the TAG Terms of Reference, a selection panel met in August 2026 and recommended eight candidates from twelve nominations for appointment by MOS4 (see UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.15.1).

[2] https://raptors.cms.int/meetings/advisory-committee

Saker Falcon Task Force and Saker Falcon Global Action Plan

19. The Coordinating Unit supported the STF and facilitated implementation of the SakerGAP through the Saker Falcon Steering Group, comprising representatives of the Coordinating Unit, the STF Chair, the Technical Advisor and the Coordinator of the Electrocution Discussion Group. Three STF meetings were held online: STF13 (29 May 2024), STF14 (26 May 2025) and STF15 (8 September 2025).

20. The STF developed the Adaptive Management Framework (AMF), including its Governance Module, and a shorter policy paper on a Decision-Making System for setting Saker Falcon harvest quotas. The proposed Decision-Making System was considered by STF15 and ScC-SC8 and discussed at COP15. Decisions 15.173–15.174 provide for further monitoring, review of the SakerGAP, regional workshops and renewal of STF membership. The CITES Secretariat participated in STF14 and STF15, and bilateral discussions explored consistency between the AMF and CITES requirements for quota setting. Mongolia offered to host an in-person STF meeting, but sufficient funding was not secured. Further details and proposed next steps are presented in the report on the SakerGAP implementation (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.1).

21. Under a Small-Scale Funding Agreement, the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF) conducted a follow-up to the 2015 falconers' survey and a separate survey of electrocution cases and available databases. The falconers' survey received over 300 responses from across the Saker Falcon range. Its report (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.5) was launched at a COP15 side event and is available on the STF webpage[3]. Publication of the electrocution data remains pending development of a suitable online repository.

African-Eurasian Vulture Multi-species Action Plan

22. The Coordinating Unit continued to facilitate implementation of the Vulture MsAP (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.16a), working with the Vulture Coordination Group. Pursuant to Resolution 12.10 (Rev.COP14) and Decision 14.155, it drafted terms of reference for an intergovernmental Vulture MsAP Working Group and explored arrangements for overall and regional coordination. This work continues under Decisions 15.170–15.172. Nominations to the Working Group remain limited, and dedicated funding for its operation has not been secured.

23. The Mid-Term Implementation Review of the Vulture MsAP (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.16c), prepared by the Endangered Wildlife Trust, was finalized in late 2023 following a special session at the European Vulture Conference (Cáceres, Spain, 14–17 November 2023) and launched at COP14. The Review highlighted the urgent need to strengthen conservation action for vultures across Africa and Eurasia. The Mid-Term Review of the Egyptian Vulture Flyway Action Plan, presented at MOS3, was also published[4].

24. Two regional frameworks for implementing the Vulture MsAP were completed:

    a. The West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP, UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.14a) was reviewed by the Sessional Committee

[3] https://raptors.cms.int/workinggroup/saker-falcon-task-force

[4] https://raptors.cms.int/publication/mid-term-implementation-review-flyway-action-plan-conservation-balkan-and-central-asian

of the CMS Scientific Council at ScC-SC7 (Bonn, 17–20 September 2024) and adopted by the StC56 (Bonn, 25–27 March 2025). The Coordinating Unit submitted a funding proposal to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment to support priority WAVCAP actions. A regional implementation workshop is scheduled for Abuja on 3–5 November 2026, with support from RSPB and co-hosted by the Nigerian Government and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, to develop project concepts addressing WAVCAP priorities.

b. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) Vulture Conservation Strategy and Action Plan (VCSAP) 2025-2035 (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.24), developed by SADC with the support of the Coordinating Unit on the basis of a situation analysis, was endorsed by SADC Ministers on 22 May 2025 and launched in Johannesburg on 26–27 August 2025. Similar approaches are being explored with ECOWAS and other African Regional Economic Communities.

25. To address key threats, the Coordinating Unit participated in a regional workshop on the belief-based use of vultures (Johannesburg, 28 August 2025), bringing together governments, NGOs and traditional healers; supported a capacity-building mission to The Gambia through voluntary contributions, following mass poisoning linked to belief-based use; and collaborated with the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) and the CMS Working Group on Migratory Species and Health to produce the WOAH–CMS fact sheet on veterinary NSAIDs (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.20).

26. A questionnaire on implementation of the Vulture MsAP, based on the COP14 Decisions, was circulated to Parties and Signatories, with an accompanying webinar held on 15 July 2025. The responses informed the progress report to COP15 (UNEP/CMS/COP15/Doc.26.6) and consideration of further action under Decisions 15.170–15.172. In April 2026, the Vulture Coordination Group began planning further review of the Vulture MsAP and the Cinereous Vulture action plan. Further detail is given in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.2(Rev.1).

Sooty Falcon International Single Species Action Plan

27. The International Single Species Action Plan for the Sooty Falcon (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.13a), finalized with support from a consultant and the revitalised Sooty Falcon Working Group, was presented at a COP14 side event. ScC-SC7 recommended the Plan for adoption (Bonn, 17–20 September 2024) and StC56 adopted it (Bonn, 25–27 March 2025). The Plan was subsequently launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Abu Dhabi, 9–15 October 2025). The Coordinating Unit also advised Egypt on its national sooty falcon action plan. The adoption is recorded in UNEP/CMS/StC56/Report, paragraph 137.

28. Implementation support included a side event at the Sixteenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP16) (Riyadh, 2–13 December 2024); cooperation with the Mohamed bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund on satellite tagging and genetic studies; discussions with Bahrain on hosting a technical meeting on island-nesting colonies; an online Sooty Falcon Knowledge Exchange Meeting (19 November 2025)[5]; and an online workshop entitled “Sooty Falcon International Single Species Action Plan Workshop: Building support toward active conservation” (5 February 2026)[6]. A collection of papers on the

[5] https://raptors.cms.int/meeting/sooty-falcon-knowledge-exchange-meeting#documents

[6] https://raptors.cms.int/meeting/sooty-falcon-international-single-species-action-plan-workshop-building-support-toward

species was published in *Ornis Hungarica*, volume 34, issue 1 (2026), expanding the available evidence on its biology and conservation. A project with the Libyan Ministry of Environment and the IUCN Centre for Mediterranean Cooperation is being developed to strengthen capacity to monitor and conserve the breeding population identified in Libya. The species webpage and bibliography were updated[7]. Further details are provided in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.5(Rev.1).

Steppe Eagle Global Action Plan

29. Following the identification of the Steppe Eagle as a priority for action planning at TAG3 (Sempach, Switzerland, 12–14 December 2018) and the 2023 Almaty conference, the Coordinating Unit led the development of the Global Action Plan for the Conservation of the Steppe Eagle (SEGAP), in collaboration with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). RSPB provided a compiler who worked with the Coordinating Unit and six regional experts. Development of the Plan received financial support from The Earthshot Prize and UK International Development from the UK government. An expert workshop was held in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 6–8 May 2025[8], the draft Plan was developed with expert input and consultation of Range States.

30. The SEGAP was considered by ScC-SC8 (UNEP/CMS/ScC-SC8/Report) and adopted by COP15 through Resolution 12.12 (Rev.COP15) Action Plans for Birds. It was presented at a COP15 side event and an online launch on 23 June 2026, attended by 70 participants, with contributions from India, Kazakhstan and Saudi Arabia)[9]. The full Plan is available in English, with summaries in English, Arabic, Kazakh and Russian and separate communication materials on the dedicated SEGAP webpage[10]. A research consortium was subsequently formed to pool satellite-tracking data and investigate key staging areas and causes of mortality. Further details are provided in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.13.4 (Rev.2).

Other species and cross-cutting initiatives

31. **Electrocution and energy infrastructure:** the Coordinating Unit co-organized with the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) the webinar 'Grid Infrastructure and Migratory Birds' (7 November 2024, over 150 participants)[11], took part in IRENA's 15th General Assembly, and gave closing remarks at the IFC/EBRD webinar launching the tip sheet 'Preventing Electrocution Risks for Birds on Distribution Lines' (11 June 2026)[12].

32. **Illegal killing, taking and trade:** the Coordinating Unit supported the establishment of the South-West Asia Illegal Taking of Migratory Birds Intergovernmental Task Force, including through a preparatory meeting in Riyadh in January 2024, and assisted its newly appointed Coordinator. It also participated in the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT6). Working with the MIKT Coordinator, the Coordinating Unit helped organize the workshop on national action plans addressing illegal killing, taking and trade of migratory birds in

[7] https://raptors.cms.int/page/international-single-species-action-plan-sooty-falcon

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

[9] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2g-pWyTZSxg

[10] https://raptors.cms.int/steppe-eagle-global-action-plan

[11] https://www.irena.org/Events/2024/Nov/Grid-Infrastructure-and-Migratory-Birds

[12] https://www.ifc.org/en/events/2026/preventing-bird-electrocution-on-distribution-lines

North Africa, held in Tangier, Morocco, on 29 September–1 October 2026[13], including a sessions on illegal taking and trapping of raptors. The Coordinating Unit also provides advice to a project led by Fauna & Flora and funded by the Illegal Wildlife Trade Challenge Fund, addressing illegal falcon trade in Kyrgyzstan and Saker Falcon populations in Central Asia (2025–2027).

33. **Reintroduction:** the report 'Raptors Reintroduction and Reinforcement Programmes: Experiences from the Field' (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.1), based on expert interviews across Europe, Africa and Asia and with contributions from TAG members, was launched on 11 June 2026[14]. The panel discussion held at the launch is summarized in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.2.

34. **Other species:** the Coordinating Unit advised a coalition of South African NGOs on a status assessment of the black harrier (*Circus maurus*; Endangered, Category 1 Table 1 of Annex 3 of the Raptors MOU), a TAG priority species; the NGOs chose to prepare a national action plan first. It also followed India's establishment of the Central Asian Flyway Initiative Secretariat at the Wildlife Institute of India and related ongoing work on Pallas's fish eagle.

35. **IUCN Species Survival Commission (SSC) Raptor Specialist Group:** as a founding member, the Coordinating Unit supported the establishment of the Group. Opportunities for cooperation, including possible recognition as a Cooperating Partner of the Raptors MOU, could be explored..

National strategies, capacity building and resource mobilization

36. In line with paragraph 12 of the MOU, the Coordinating Unit supported the development of national raptor conservation strategies in Morocco and Uzbekistan, a national raptor workshop in Uganda (March 2025)[15] and a workshop in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan (May 2026)[16] to advance national conservation planning. Morocco launched its National Raptor Conservation Strategy at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in October 2025. A proposal for a regional raptor conservation strategy for the Arabian Peninsula is being revised following discussions with the Dubai Environment and Climate Change Authority. The Coordinating Unit also co-organised a West Asia Raptor Monitoring Workshop with UNEP Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA) in Abu Dhabi in December 2023.

37. A questionnaire circulated to Signatories informed the report “Assessing Capacity-Building Needs for Raptor Conservation in Africa and Eurasia” (UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Inf.3).

38. The Coordinating Unit is developing a memorandum of understanding with The Peregrine Fund (TPF) and the Raptor Research Foundation concerning the African Raptor Leadership Grant. It has also contributed to discussions with TPF on establishing an African raptor research network.

39. In addition to the WAVCAP proposal to the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, the Coordinating Unit contributed to Kunming Biodiversity Fund proposals

[13] https://www.cms.int/meeting/workshop-national-ikb-action-plans-north-africa

[14] https://raptors.cms.int/eventcalendar/webinar-raptors-reintroduction-and-reinforcement-programmes-experiences-field

[15] https://raptors.cms.int/news/uganda-takes-flight-raptor-conservation-joins-international-agreement-and-launches-national-0

[16] https://raptors.cms.int/news/landmark-seminar-bishkek-protect-central-asias-birds-prey

covering Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and a separate proposal covering Egypt, Sudan, and Uganda. It also submitted a proposal on IIRAs to the German Government and, as part of the CMS Secretariat, explored potential cooperation with Turkmenistan under the ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-9).

40. A Raptors MOU fundraising brochure was produced to support outreach to Signatories, Range States, partners and potential donors. Annual calls for voluntary contributions were sent to Signatories in accordance with the indicative contribution schedule adopted at MOS3. Voluntary contributions were received from Croatia, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. Zimbabwe provided cash and in-kind support towards hosting MOS4. The Coordinating Unit gratefully acknowledges these contributions. Further financial information is presented in document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.16.1.

Communications

41. The Coordinating Unit maintained the Raptors MOU website and news service and communicated regularly with Signatories, Cooperating Partners and stakeholders. Following the 2025 migration of the CMS family websites, technical issues affecting the Raptors MOU site were resolved, and new webpages were created for MOS4 and the SEGAP. World Migratory Bird Day was promoted every year, including with Dubai Municipality, as was International Vulture Awareness Day, and media outreach included a Mongabay article on WAVCAP implementation (September 2026)[17].

42. The Coordinating Unit represented the MOU and the CMS Secretariat at many fora, including CMS COP14 and COP15 and the meetings of the CMS Standing Committee and Scientific Council, UNCCD COP16, the IUCN World Conservation Congress, the European Vulture Conference (Cáceres, Spain, 14-17 November 2023) and BirdLife International Africa partnership meeting (Saly, Senegal, 31 August – 7 September 2024).

Coordinating Unit Workplan 2027–2029

43. The Coordinating Unit's proposed priorities for 2027–2029, to be taken forward under a new Coordinator, are subject to MOS4 guidance and available resources. These include:

    a. Ensuring continuity of the Coordinating Unit's functions through an effective handover to the incoming Programme Management Officer, and facilitating implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan by Signatories and Range States

    b. Convening and coordinating the TAG, primarily through online meetings, facilitating the work of any new working groups established by MOS4, and coordinating follow-up on the MOU's geographical scope in accordance with the Meeting's decisions;

    c. Facilitating the renewal of STF membership and the review and update of the SakerGAP, in accordance with the relevant COP15 decisions and in cooperation with CITES Secretariat;

[17] https://news.mongabay.com/2026/09/west-africas-plan-to-save-its-vultures-struggles-to-take-flight/

d. Coordinating the review of the Vulture MsAP and of the Cinereous Vulture Flyway Action Plan with relevant experts and partners, and facilitating implementation of the WAVCAP and SADC vulture conservation frameworks, including follow-up to the Abuja workshop (3–5 November 2026);

e. Facilitating implementation of the Sooty Falcon ISSAP and SEGAP by Range States and partners, and supporting the identification of priorities for further species action-plan development;

f. Facilitating further identification and conservation of IIRAs and cooperation on applying the approach in other flyways, in accordance with Resolution 15.10 and relevant COP15 Decisions;

g. Supporting the development and implementation of national and regional raptor conservation strategies and monitoring programmes, integrating raptor conservation priorities into relevant CMS initiatives addressing illegal killing, energy infrastructure and poisoning, and encouraging additional Range States to join the MOU; and

h. Mobilizing voluntary contributions, project funding and in-kind support to address funding gaps, maintain continuity of the Coordinating Unit's essential functions and advance agreed scientific, species and thematic priorities, as presented in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.16.1.

Recommended actions

44. The Meeting of Signatories is invited to:

a. Take note of this report and the progress presented in Annex 1 to this document;

b. express sincere appreciation to the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, for its continued financial and in-kind support to the CMS Office – Abu Dhabi, including the Raptors Coordinating Unit;

c. express sincere appreciation to the Government of Zimbabwe for hosting MOS4 and for its cash and in-kind support;

d. thank Croatia, France, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden for their voluntary contributions to the Raptors Trust Fund since MOS3, which have supported the work of the MOU;

e. thank TAG members for their voluntary scientific and technical expertise, and acknowledge the contributions of Cooperating Partners, experts and other partners to the work reported;

f. urge Signatories that have not yet done so to designate or formally confirm their National Contact Points through the competent authorities and notify the Coordinating Unit;

g. encourage Signatories and Cooperating Partners to support outreach to non-signatory Range States within the MOU's current geographical scope and encourage them to join the MOU; and

h. provide guidance on the proposed priorities of the Coordinating Unit for 2027–2029, taking account of the TAG Workplan and the resource requirements presented in UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.16.1.

Annex 1

Implementation of the Coordinating Unit Workplan 2024–2026 presented to MOS3

The table summarizes progress against the Workplan presented in paragraph 41 of UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS3/Doc.9. "Achieved" indicates that the stated output was delivered during the reporting period; "Ongoing" indicates work or continuing responsibilities being taken forward; and "Limited" indicates limited progress, with the main constraints identified in the relevant row.

	Workplan item (MOS3/Doc.9, para. 41)	Status	Main results
a.	Operate the Coordinating Unit to support Signatories and Range States	Ongoing, core functions maintained	Core functions maintained despite a 13-month P2 vacancy; five new Signatories joined the MOU; preparations for MOS4 undertaken.
b.	Support the TAG, incl. one physical meeting, and select new members for MOS4	Ongoing, core functions maintained	Six TAG meetings held, including TAG9 in person in Spain in 2025; eight candidates recommended for appointment by MOS4.
c.	Support national/regional raptor strategies	Ongoing	Morocco strategy launched; support to Uganda, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan; Arabian Peninsula strategy in preparation.
d.	Mainstream raptor threats in CMS avian initiatives (MIKT, ETF, etc.)	Achieved	MIKT6; SW Asia Task Force; IRENA and IFC/EBRD electrocution work; WOAH NSAID fact sheet.
e.	Maintain the Raptors MOU website	Achieved	Website restored after 2025 migration; MOS4, WAVCAP, SEGAP sooty falcon and NSAIDs pages created.
f.	Finalize and publish the Vulture MsAP Mid-Term Review and Sooty Falcon ISSAP	Achieved	Vulture MsAP Mid-Term Implementation Review completed and presented at COP14 in 2024; Sooty Falcon ISSAP adopted by StC56 in 2025 and launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress..
g.	Support coordination structures of the Vulture MsAP, SakerGAP, Sooty Falcon ISSAP	Ongoing	Vulture MsAP Working Group terms of reference drafted and coordination arrangements explored; nominations remain limited and dedicated funding has not been secured. STF meetings and Sooty Falcon expert exchanges supported.
h.	Oversee an updated SakerGAP	Ongoing	AMF and Decision-Making System developed; SakerGAP revision requested by COP15 (Decisions 15.173–15.174).
i.	Support ISSAPs for priority species	Ongoing	SEGAP and WAVCAP adopted by CMS Parties; development of the a SADC vulture conservation strategy supported; advice provided on black harrier action planning.
j.	Support regional/flyway raptor monitoring	Ongoing	West Asia monitoring workshop (2023); steppe eagle tracking consortium; sooty falcon tagging.
k.	Support the project on priorities for migratory bird habitats	Ongoing	Site Network Analysis prepared for MOS4 (Doc.12.3); Resolution 15.10 on IIRAs adopted by COP15.
l.	East African-Eurasian Flyway bottleneck monitoring project	Limited	No dedicated funding secured; further work would depend on agreed priorities and available resources.
m.	Assess raptor monitoring protocols and programmes in Asia	Ongoing	Questionnaire circulated in Asia; report in preparation.