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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

(Victoria Falls, 30 November- 2 December 2026)

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REPORTING BY SIGNATORIES AND COOPERATING PARTNERS: SYNTHESIS OF THE NATIONAL REPORTS

(Prepared by the Coordinating Unit)

Summary: This document presents a synthesis of the National Reports submitted by Signatories on their implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and its Action Plan during the period from November 2021 to April 2026.

Twenty-six Signatories submitted reports, a marked increase on the twenty received for the trial run considered at MOS3 and the highest response recorded in any reporting round to date, representing 39 per cent of the 66 Signatories to the MOU.

A report was also received from one of the MOU's Cooperating Partners, the IUCN Species Survival Commission's Vulture Specialist Group, and its contribution is summarised in section 15.

Table of Contents

Summary **3**
1. Background and introduction **4**
2. Reporting period covered by this synthesis **4**
3. Overall response rate **4**
4. High-level key messages **6**
4.1 Most successful aspects of implementation 6
4.2 Greatest difficulties in implementation 7
4.3 Main priorities for future implementation 8
5. Results at a glance **9**
6. Raptor conservation strategies and equivalent documents **9**
7. Legal protection of species against killing and unsustainable exploitation **11**
8. Species action plans and species-specific measures **12**
8.1 Single and Multi-species Action Plans 12
8.2 Reintroduction and restocking 12
8.3 Supplementary feeding 13
9. Conservation and management of habitats and sites **13**
10. Assessing and responding to threats and pressures **14**
10.1 Threat assessments 14
10.2 The three most important categories of threat 15
10.3 Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment 16
11. Action and integration across sectors **16**
12. Research, monitoring and information management **17**
12.1 Population status and trends 17
12.2 Systematic and coordinated monitoring 18
12.3 Research priorities and knowledge exchange 18
13. Raising awareness and strengthening capacity **19**
14. Resources and international cooperation **20**
14.1 Resources provided and received 20
14.2 International cooperation 21
14.3 Encouraging other Range States to sign the MOU 22
15. Reporting by Cooperating Partners **22**
15.1 Successes, difficulties and future priorities 22
15.2 Conservation strategies and species action plans 23
15.3 Threats, research and monitoring 23
15.4 Awareness, education, training and cooperation 23
16. Conclusions and observations on the reporting process **23**
Annex I - **List of Signatories submitting National Reports** **26**
Annex II - **Summary results matrix** **27**

Summary

In accordance with the provision of the Raptors MOU, Signatories are requested to submit national Reports to Meetings of Signatories (MOS) to facilitate the review of progress in implementing the MOU and its Action Plan. Following the trial use of the standard reporting format considered at MOS3, the format has now been applied in a full reporting cycle. The present document synthesises the National Reports received and provide an overview of implementation progress since MOS3.

Twenty-six Signatories submitted National Reports, representing 39 per cent of the 66 Signatories to the MOU and providing a broad geographical coverage across the three MOU regions. This represents the highest number and proportion of reporting Signatories since the reporting process was established, enhancing the ability to assess implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan at both regional and global levels. Calculated against the number of Signatories in each region, the response rate was 52 per cent in Europe (12 of 23), 38 per cent in Africa (11 of 29) and 21 per cent in Asia (3 of 14). The most notable change since the reporting cycle reviewed at MOS3 was the strengthening of participation from African Signatories, which increased from 15 per cent to 38 per cent, while participation from Asian Signatories declined from 36 per cent to 21 per cent. Not all respondents answered every question; response rates for individual questions are provided in the relevant sections below and summarised in the results matrix at Annex II.

As at MOS3, the areas of greatest reported progress concerned legislation, policies, strategies and plans. Almost all Signatories reported legislation restricting the use of exposed poison baits (25 of 26, 96 per cent) and full legal protection of Annex 1 species (20 of 26, 77 per cent), and large majorities reported habitat measures, environmental assessment requirements, population monitoring, and awareness and education activities. Progress was more uneven on national raptor conservation strategies, species action plans, species-recovery measures such as reintroduction and supplementary feeding, cross-government engagement and the mobilisation of dedicated resources.

Constraints on funding and technical capacity were once again the most frequently cited implementation difficulties, particularly among African and Asian Signatories, alongside the scale of the challenge of retrofitting power infrastructure and of securing cross-sectoral coordination. Habitat destruction and degradation was identified as one of the three most important threats by every Signatory that reported, followed by collisions and electrocution (54 per cent) and, more prominently than in previous reporting, climate change (35 per cent), the latter cited overwhelmingly by African Signatories.

Encouraging developments during the reporting period include the accession of new Signatories, notably Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (February 2024), Uganda (March 2025) and Zimbabwe (May 2025, the 66th Signatory and host of MOS4); the adoption of new or updated national strategies and legislation, including Morocco's Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Birds of Prey 2024–2034 and Kenya's Vulture Multi-species Action Plan 2024–2034; and continued species-recovery successes such as the reintroduction of the bearded vulture (*Gypaetus barbatus*) in the Alps. The findings presented in this synthesis provides an important basis for assessing progress in the implementation of the Raptors MOU and its Action Plan, identifying persistent challenges and emerging priorities, and informing decisions and conservation actions during the next intersessional period.

1. Background and introduction

Paragraph 15 of the MOU calls on the Meeting of Signatories to adopt a format for Signatories to report on a regular basis on the implementation of their raptor conservation strategies or equivalent measures, and paragraph 16 provides for the Coordinating Unit to prepare an overview of progress in the implementation of the Action Plan prior to each session of the Meeting of Signatories.

A standard reporting format was developed by the Technical Advisory Group with the support of the Coordinating Unit, structured in alignment with the MOU and its Action Plan, and issued on a trial basis ahead of MOS3. The format was formally adopted by MOS3 in 2023, and the present cycle represents the first full reporting cycle using approved format. This strengthens the ability of Signatories and MOS4 to assess implementation of the Raptor MOU and its Action Plan, identify emerging trends and priorities, and compare progress across reporting cycle.

The reporting format keeps the information focused on a selection of “headline” issues and, in common with analogous processes across the CMS Family of instruments, seeks to balance the generation of sufficient information for monitoring and adaptive management against the burden of reporting. Attention has also been given to coherence with CMS national reporting, inter alia through compatible question formulations.

All those who responded are warmly acknowledged for the valuable information they have contributed. While this document summarises that information, the individual National Reports themselves, many with accompanying documentation, constitute a rich information resource whose further use should be encouraged.

2. Reporting period covered by this synthesis

Signatories were invited to report on implementation of the MOU during the period from 1 November 2021 to April 2026, the deadline for submission being 30 June 2026. As in the trial run, it is possible that some information provided referred to a wider period; where it was clear that information related to earlier years it has been treated with caution. A number of respondents referred to developments in 2025 and early 2026, for example the renewal of Italy's national Steering Committee on Illegal Killing of Birds by Ministerial Decree No. 349/2025, and the publication in April 2026 of a Peatland Strategy Delivery Plan for Northern Ireland, and these are reflected in the account below.

3. Overall response rate

> **Response rate:** National Reports received from 26 Signatories, representing 39 per cent of the 66 Signatories to the MOU; the highest response rate recorded in any reporting round to date.

Reports were received from 26 Signatories. With the number of Signatories having grown to 66 during the period, with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan having signed in February 2024 at CMS COP14, Uganda having signed on 19 March 2025 and Zimbabwe on 23 May 2025 as the 66th Signatory, this represents approximately 39 per cent of Signatories, an increase on both the number (20) and the proportion (33 per cent of the then 61 Signatories) recorded for the trial run at MOS3.

Viewed against the full history of reporting under the MOU, this is the highest level of engagement yet recorded, in both absolute and proportional terms: 12 of the then 40 Signatories (30 per cent) reported to MOS1 in 2012, 17 of 52 (33 per cent) to MOS2 in 2015, and 20 of 61 (33 per cent) to MOS3 in 2023. Ten Signatories (Belgium, Burundi, Kenya, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Tunisia, Uganda, Yemen and Zimbabwe) reported for the first time in

the present round, bringing to 41, or 62 per cent, the number of Signatories that have reported at least once since MOS1; Hungary is the only Signatory to have reported in all four rounds.

Because the Signatories are not evenly distributed among the three regions of the MOU, the number of reports received from a region is not on its own a reliable indication of engagement. Table 1 therefore expresses the response for each region as a percentage of the Signatories in that region, and compares it with the equivalent figure for the trial run.

Region	Signatories	Reports received	% of Signatories in region	% of all reports
Africa	29	11	38 %	42 %
Asia	14	3	21 %	12 %
Europe	23	12	52 %	46 %
TOTAL	**66**	**26**	**39 %**	**100 %**

Table 1: National Reports received, by region, as a proportion of the Signatories in each region.

The European response rate of 52 per cent (12 of 23 Signatories) was the highest of the three regions and is unchanged in proportion from the trial run. The most striking development is in Africa, where the response rate rose from 15 per cent to 38 per cent (11 of 29 Signatories), a near-threefold increase, and one achieved despite the denominator itself having grown by two through the accessions of Uganda and Zimbabwe. In Asia the picture moved in the opposite direction: three of 14 Signatories reported (21 per cent), compared with four of 11 (36 per cent) at MOS3, the fall reflecting both a lower absolute number of reports and the accession of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan in February 2024. Encouraging reporting from Asian Signatories may therefore merit particular attention during the next intersessional period.

The increase in reporting participation is a positive indicator of Signatory engagement with the Raptors MOU and enhances the value of the reporting process as a mechanism for tracking implementation progress across the flyway. Continued efforts to improve reporting rates, particularly in Asia, would further strengthen the evidence base available to the Meeting of Signatories (MOS) and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG).

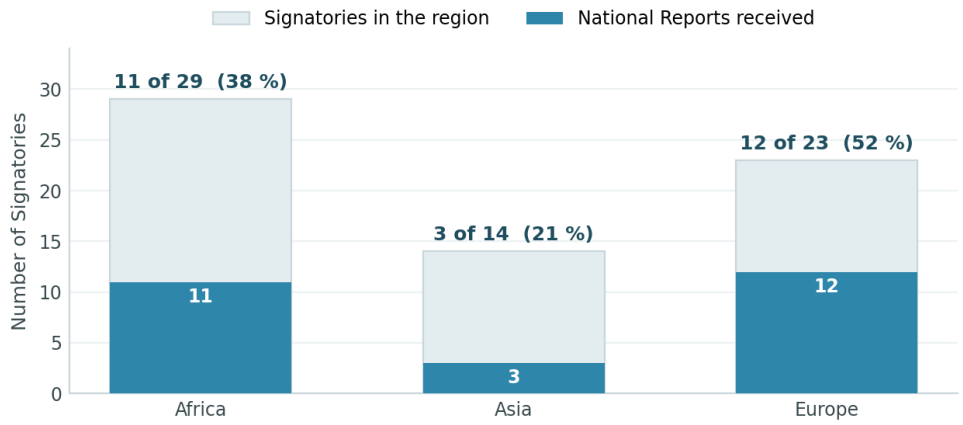


Figure 1: National Reports received from each region, against the number of Signatories in that region.

Note on the figures used in this synthesis. All percentages in this document are therefore calculated against the 26 reporting Signatories unless otherwise stated. A number of responses were provided in French and have been reflected in this English synthesis.

4. High-level key messages

This section invited respondents to summarise the most successful aspects of implementation, the greatest difficulties encountered, and the main priorities for future implementation, distilling the body of their report into brief "high-level" messages for decision-makers and wider audiences.

4.1 Most successful aspects of implementation

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

The aspects most frequently cited as areas of positive progress again related to advances in legislation, policy, strategies and plans. Prominent examples included:

- new or strengthened legislation: Côte d'Ivoire cited its Wildlife Management Act No. 2024-364 of 11 June 2024 and its Environment Code (Act No. 2023-900 of 23 November 2023); Saudi Arabia its Executive Hunting Regulations of 2021, which prohibit the hunting of all birds of prey occurring in the Kingdom, and its 2021 Executive Regulation on Trade in Wildlife Species; Tunisia its new law implementing CITES, which it described as substantially strengthening controls on illegal trade in raptors; and the United Kingdom the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Act 2024, which introduced a licensing regime for land used to take red grouse (*Lagopus lagopus scotica*), with evidence of raptor persecution grounds for suspension;
- adoption of national raptor strategies and action plans: Morocco's Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Birds of Prey 2024–2034; Kenya's launch of the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan 2024–2034; and Hungary's approval in 2024 of species action plans for short-toed snake eagle (*Circaetus gallicus*), Montagu's harrier (*Circus pygargus*), lesser spotted eagle (*Clanga pomarina*), saker falcon (*Falco cherrug*) and European honey buzzard (*Pernis apivorus*);
- species-recovery successes: Switzerland reported that the bearded vulture reintroduction programme continues to progress, with 26 young fledged in 2025 and breeding now recorded in five cantons, and that it had supplied young birds from the canton of Fribourg to the red kite (*Milvus milvus*) reintroduction project in Calabria; Italy reported an improvement in the conservation status of the griffon vulture (*Gyps fulvus*), downlisted nationally from Critically Endangered to Near Threatened, together with the release of at least 72 birds in southern Sardinia under the LIFE Safe for Vultures project; and Germany reported the annual release of bearded vultures in Berchtesgaden National Park, a species eradicated there more than 140 years ago;
- strengthened monitoring and knowledge: Saudi Arabia highlighted the first nationwide survey of the wintering steppe eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*); Denmark the effectiveness of its monitoring systems, with most populations now stable or increasing; and Belgium, Kenya and Uganda the value of GPS and satellite tracking and of annual survey work;
- enhancement of site protection and conservation: Burundi reported the strengthening of protection of the Rusizi and Kibira National Parks and other protected areas, including the equipping of eco-guards; Italy the expansion of its network of Special Protection Areas to 842 sites covering more than 6.2 million hectares; and Saudi Arabia the expansion of protected areas under the Saudi Green Initiative, supporting the protection of migratory flyways, breeding areas and key bottlenecks;
- enforcement and anti-poisoning measures: Italy reported the establishment of a national network of at least 15 anti-poison dog units, with a further 10 planned; and the United Kingdom reported the creation in 2024 of a Harrier Task Force by the National Wildlife Crime Unit and Natural England, which it stated had prevented the illegal killing of satellite-tagged hen harriers (*Circus cyaneus*) at all eight identified hotspots; and

- the accession of new Signatories and greater national engagement: Uganda listed its signature of the MOU among its principal achievements, and Zimbabwe noted its status as the 66th Signatory and host of MOS4, together with the integration of raptor conservation priorities into national biodiversity planning.

Awareness-raising, capacity-building and improved inter-institutional collaboration also featured prominently, particularly among African Signatories. Libya, for instance, reported improved collaboration between the Ministry of Environment, academic institutions and national conservation organisations, while Niger emphasised capacity-building for hunters, traditional practitioners and forest officers so that they understand the role of raptors, and vultures in particular.

4.2 Greatest difficulties in implementation

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Constraints on financial resources and technical capacity were by far the most frequently cited difficulties, and they underlie many of the other challenges reported. These were especially prominent among African and Asian Signatories (Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Libya, Morocco, Niger, Somalia, Tunisia, Yemen and Zimbabwe all identified them), but they were also noted by several European Signatories. Somalia cited a lack of funding, security problems and the remoteness of parts of the country; Denmark referred to limited administrative and financial resources, requiring the prioritisation of statutory obligations; and Italy pointed to the absence of stable funding beyond EU LIFE project cycles, which undermines the continuity of conservation action once projects close.

Other recurrent themes included:

- the slow pace of retrofitting dangerous power infrastructure: Hungary and Slovakia both described progress as slow despite successes and innovations, Hungary attributing this to the “enormous heritage” of poorly designed powerlines across the country, and Morocco reporting difficulties in implementing corrective and preventive measures against electrocution;
- the persistence of illegal killing and poisoning: Hungary reported a continuing, though slowly decreasing, level of targeted poisoning and shooting of raptors, and Belgium noted that several tagged raptors had been confirmed shot on migration;
- weaknesses in coordination and in data: Italy and Zimbabwe both identified fragmented institutional coordination and the absence of an integrated national database, Italy noting that data are consequently not comparable across regions, research groups and volunteer teams; Saudi Arabia identified limited systematic monitoring across flyways and the absence of data-management and sharing frameworks; and Norway observed that ensuring cross-sectoral engagement is always challenging;
- the difficulty of newly acceding Signatories in establishing implementation machinery: Uganda reported the absence of a budget line specific to the MOU, limited awareness among implementing partners of its requirements and inadequate technical capacity; and
- difficulties of a more particular kind: Germany drew attention to the unwieldiness of the site list in Annex 3 of the MOU, which for EU Member States includes both Special Protection Areas and Important Bird Areas and which for Germany alone comprises over 900 sites, preventing a quick overview; Switzerland recalled that work to inventory important sites was discontinued following the rejection of the revision of the Federal Act on Hunting in the referendum of 27 September 2020; Yemen described the weakening of law enforcement and the decline in research and monitoring that followed the war; and Chad cited a lack of communication with the Secretariat and the absence of regional workshops, whether in person or online.

Two responses cast a different light on this question. The Netherlands stated that there are no difficulties in implementation, the MOU and Action Plan being integrated into national legislation through the EU Birds Directive, and Sweden stated that raptor conservation is implemented through existing frameworks rather than through active implementation of the MOU or Action Plan. The strength of the legal framework, and of the financial resources available, within the European Union has indeed resulted in many EU Signatories reporting stable or increasing raptor populations. This highlights the particular value of the Raptors MOU in guiding the engagement and investments of the European Union and its Member States beyond the EU's geographical boundaries, along the flyways where many of European migratory raptors spend a large part of their lives.

The recurring nature of these constraints across successive reporting cycles suggests that capacity development and resource mobilisation remain among the most significant barriers to effective implementation of the Raptors MOU and its Action Plan. Addressing these systemic constraints will be important to translating national commitments into sustained implementation on the ground.

4.3 Main priorities for future implementation

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

The priorities identified were closely aligned with the difficulties reported, and clustered around five themes.

- Developing national strategies and action plans. Burundi, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Niger and Saudi Arabia all placed the preparation of a national raptor strategy or action plan among their leading priorities; Côte d'Ivoire set out a sequenced approach of stakeholder awareness under its 2024 wildlife law, the establishment of national coordination, inclusive development and validation of a national raptor action plan, and the mobilisation of financing for it. Norway's priority was to assess the BirdLife Norway report and proceed towards a national action plan.
- Mobilising resources. Zimbabwe placed the securing of sustainable funding first among its priorities, combining government allocations with external donor support; Burundi, Kenya, Niger and Somalia expressed the same need, Somalia framing its priority, the rehabilitation of former sites on the Red Sea and Indian Ocean coasts, as conditional on obtaining funding.
- Strengthening monitoring, research and data management. Italy proposed a national monitoring scheme and integrated database for migratory birds of prey; Tunisia proposed a national raptor database serving as a dashboard for managers, researchers and private actors; Saudi Arabia proposed expanded population assessments, bottleneck surveys and threat assessments along flyways; and Libya, Yemen and Zimbabwe all identified the closing of data gaps.
- Addressing energy infrastructure and other mortality factors. Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovakia identified the continuation of powerline retrofitting in cooperation with distribution and transmission companies, Hungary under its "Accessible Sky" scheme; Italy proposed prioritising retrofitting in areas of documented mortality and integrating bird-sensitivity mapping into spatial planning for new energy infrastructure; and Spain identified the reduction of energy infrastructure-related mortality, the alignment of Common Agricultural Policy priorities with the needs of farmland raptors, and the minimisation of intoxication from rodenticides, lead ammunition and poison baits.
- Implementing wider legal and policy frameworks. Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovakia identified the implementation of the EU Nature Restoration Regulation; Switzerland the implementation of Phase II of its Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan for 2025–2030; and Côte d'Ivoire the expansion of its protected-area network in line with the 30x30 target of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. The Netherlands also emphasised support for conservation along the flyways outside the European Union, where Dutch migratory raptors spend a large part of their lives.

Denmark noted that specific priorities have not yet been formally established, policy priorities and resource allocations being under review following the formation of a new government.

5. Results at a glance

Figure 2 draws together the headline results across all sections of the reporting format, expressed as the percentage of the 26 reporting Signatories that answered “yes”. The pattern is broadly consistent with that observed at MOS3: strong performance on legal and procedural measures, and weaker performance on measures that require dedicated resources, formal planning or engagement beyond the environment sector.

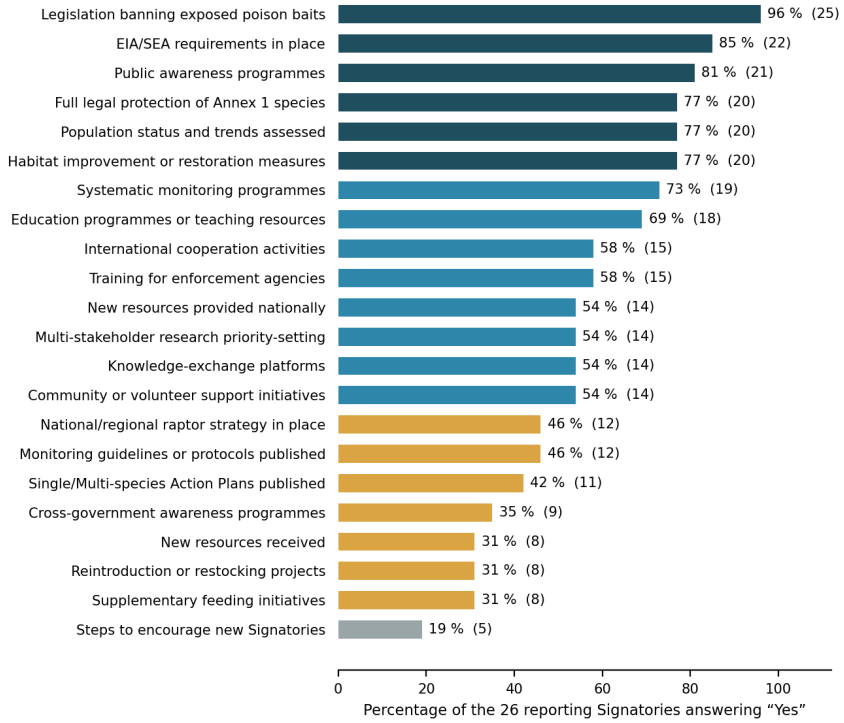


Figure 2: Implementation snapshot: percentage of the 26 reporting Signatories answering “yes” to each headline question. Figures in brackets are numbers of Signatories.

6. Raptor conservation strategies and equivalent documents

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Paragraph 12 of the MOU provides for Signatories to prepare a national or regional strategy or equivalent document for category 1 and, where appropriate, category 2 species in Table 1 of the Action Plan. Twelve Signatories (46 per cent) reported that such a document exists, two indicated that one is in preparation, and twelve answered “no”. Tunisia selected both “yes” and “in preparation”, referring to the National Forest and Rangeland Development Strategy 2026–2050, which is under development and contains a chapter dedicated to wildlife. Tunesia is therefore counted under both headings.

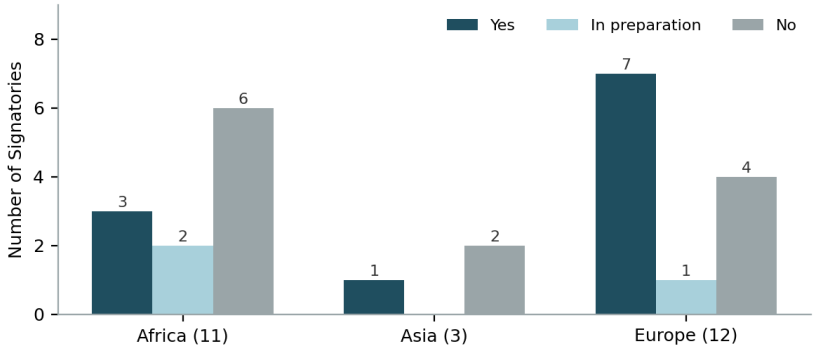


Figure 3: Existence of a national or regional raptor conservation strategy or equivalent document, by region.

The regional pattern is uneven. In Europe, 7 of 12 respondents (58 per cent) answered “yes”, but as at MOS3 the figures should be read with caution: Hungary, the Netherlands, Slovakia and Sweden all answered by reference to the EU's Strategic Approach to Raptor Conservation of 2019, and Germany by reference to the Birds Directive, whereas Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom answered “no”, despite describing a range of national or regional instruments that address raptors conservation. Spain's answer set out the position clearly: there is no general national strategy for all raptors, but there are officially approved strategies for the Spanish imperial eagle (*Aquila adalberti*) and the bearded vulture, guild-based strategies for lesser kestrel (*Falco naumanni*) and Montagu's harrier, guidelines on the feeding of scavengers, and a national strategy against the illegal use of poison baits. Italy explained that action for raptors is already foreseen under the Birds Directive and that part of the competence rests with the regions.

In Africa, 3 of 11 respondents answered “yes” and a further two “in preparation”. Morocco's Strategy and Action Plan for the Conservation of Birds of Prey 2024–2034 is the clearest example of a dedicated national raptor instrument, covering the whole national territory and currently under implementation; it also identifies twelve diurnal raptor species requiring particular conservation attention, and defines research priorities for the coming decade. Burundi answered by reference to its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2019–2030 read together with its Environment Code, while Côte d’Ivoire and Niger answered by reference to the regional West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan 2023–2043 (WAVCAP), which Côte d’Ivoire described as the guiding plan for on-the-ground conservation action on vultures.

In Asia, Saudi Arabia answered “yes” by reference to the National Biodiversity Framework submitted under the Convention on Biological Diversity, while noting that there is no dedicated national raptor strategy.

Reasons given for the absence of a strategy included the following (summarised and paraphrased):

- limited financial and technical resources, together with competing priorities (Chad, Denmark, Libya and Zimbabwe). Libya added that raptor needs are increasingly considered within broader biodiversity and protected-area work, and Zimbabwe that its national raptor strategy is pending development and expected to be tabled once funding is secured;
- recent accession to the MOU (Uganda, which signed on 19 March 2025 and reported that efforts are under way);
- coverage by more general avian or biodiversity frameworks (Italy, Kenya, Spain, Yemen). Kenya listed its National Wildlife Strategy 2030, its wildlife poisoning response protocol and its Vulture Multi-species Action Plan 2024–2034 as together serving the purpose; and

- institutional and other constraints: Iran (Islamic Republic of) pointed to a lack of funds to engage a research centre or university and to resistance to activities related to raptors and to the MOU.

Asked whether their strategy or equivalent document addresses all of the activities listed in Table 2 of the Action Plan, 7 Signatories answered “yes”, 12 “partly” and 7 “no”. The most frequently given reason for partial coverage, offered by Hungary and Slovakia, was that an instrument agreed at European Union level can address measures at that level while some measures can in practice only be implemented nationally. Germany noted that most listed activities are addressed but that area-related measures are the responsibility of the 16 Länder, and that the reporting deadline was too short to allow coordination with them. Saudi Arabia reported that its Framework covers all Table 2 activities except certain aspects of systematic monitoring of migratory raptors.

Taken together, the responses suggest that the main gap is not simply the absence of strategies, but the extent to which existing national, regional and broader biodiversity instruments provide comprehensive coverage of the Action Plan and a clear basis for implementation.

7. Legal protection of species against killing and unsustainable exploitation

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Twenty Signatories (77 per cent) confirmed that all species of migratory birds of prey listed in Annex 1 of the MOU and present in their country are granted full legal protection from deliberate killing and taking from the wild. Five answered “partly” (Libya, Norway, Somalia, Yemen and Zimbabwe), while Chad, answered “no”. All 12 European respondents except Norway answered “yes”, as did 7 of 11 African respondents and 2 of 3 Asian respondents.

The legal frameworks cited illustrate the diversity of legal traditions across the MOU area. Italy referred to National Law No. 157/1992, under which all diurnal and nocturnal birds of prey are strictly protected and any form of killing, capture, keeping or trade is prohibited, with administrative and criminal sanctions. Switzerland cited Article 7(1) of the Federal Act on Hunting. Sweden cited the Species Protection Ordinance (2007:845). Saudi Arabia reported that 55 of the 94 species listed in Annex 1 have been recorded in the Kingdom and that all are protected under the Environment Law issued by Royal Decree No. M/165 of 10 July 2020. Kenya cited the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act, Cap. 376, and Uganda section 34(2) of the Uganda Wildlife Act, Cap. 315, which declares species protected under any international treaty to which Uganda is a party to be protected species. Belgium and the United Kingdom both described a federated or devolved framework providing consistent protection through separate regional or national statutes.

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting) on the poison-baits question.

Twenty-five Signatories (96 per cent) reported legislation in place banning the use of exposed poison baits and other toxic chemical methods of predator or pest control, the highest positive response of any question in the reporting format. The only exception was Chad, which answered “not known”; no Signatory answered “no”.

A number of respondents described the mechanisms in some detail. Hungary and Slovakia reported that under national legislation pesticides may only be used in accordance with their licence, that no rodenticide is licensed for exposed outdoor use, that hunting legislation does not permit the poisoning of predators, and that the Criminal Code addresses the misuse of toxic substances. Germany cited paragraph 4(3) No. 6 of the Regulation on Species Conservation. Spain listed Act 42/2007 on Biodiversity and Natural Heritage together with the relevant articles of the Penal Code. Italy reported that the ban under Law No. 157/1992 is

further regulated through periodically renewed Ministerial Ordinances issued by the Ministry of Health. Côte d'Ivoire reported that Article 90 of its 2024 wildlife law provides for imprisonment of five to ten years and fines of 5 to 10 million CFA francs for hunting by means of encircling fire, poison or narcotics. Kenya cited section 95A of Cap. 376, and Burundi its ratification of the Stockholm Convention as the instrument restricting the persistent organic pollutants used in baits.

8. Species action plans and species-specific measures

8.1 Single and Multi-species Action Plans

Response rate: 25 Signatories (96 per cent of those reporting); one Signatory did not answer.

Eleven Signatories (42 per cent) reported that Single or Multi-species Action Plans had been published for species of migratory birds of prey in their country, four reported plans in preparation, and ten answered “no”. The proportions were similar in Europe (6 of 12, 50 per cent) and Africa (4 of 11, 36 per cent).

The plans reported ranged widely in scope. Hungary reported species action plans approved in 2024 for short-toed snake eagle, Montagu's harrier, lesser spotted eagle, saker falcon and European honey buzzard, an update in 2019 for red-footed falcon (*Falco vespertinus*), and a plan for red kite drafted and expected to be approved in 2026. Slovakia reported the updating of its red-footed falcon plan in 2024. Switzerland is implementing the action plan for the little owl (*Athene noctua*) and has started a conservation programme for the Eurasian scops owl (*Otus scops*). Kenya reported the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan for Kenya 2024–2034, addressing eight vulture species. Belgium reported single-species plans in Flanders for marsh harrier (*Circus aeruginosus*) and Montagu's harrier and a multi-species plan in Wallonia covering marsh, hen and Montagu's harriers. Denmark reported that the 2005 red kite action plan remains its only dedicated published plan. Germany reported national plans under development for red kite and Eurasian hobby (*Falco subbuteo*), and Iran (Islamic Republic of) plans for saker falcon and Egyptian vulture (*Neophron percnopterus*). Chad and Côte d'Ivoire reported vulture-focused work in preparation, Côte d'Ivoire noting that a SOS-Forêts project on the restoration of vulture populations through community conservation, framed within the West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan, was due to launch in July 2026. The Coordinating Unit maintains a summary of information on Single and Multi-species Action Plans provided by Signatories over the years, and publishes all plans available in electronic format on the Raptors MOU website.

8.2 Reintroduction and restocking

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); two answered “not known”.

Eight Signatories (31 per cent) reported reintroduction or restocking projects implemented in accordance with prevailing international guidelines, sixteen answered “no”, and two (Chad and Zimbabwe) answered “not known”. Five of the eight were European. This remains one of the areas of least reported activity, perhaps unsurprisingly given the resources such programmes require.

Switzerland described the bearded vulture programme, in which captive-reared young are released by the hacking method at around 90 to 100 days of age at protected sites in the Alps and monitored and provisioned thereafter. Italy reported the release of 12 captive-bred Egyptian vultures in Basilicata and one in Sicily under LIFE Egyptian Vulture. Spain reported translocation and reinforcement projects for lesser kestrel using captive breeding, and three osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) projects using juveniles translocated from wild nests in Scotland, Norway and the Balearic Islands. Saudi Arabia reported three initiatives, including the

restocking of Barbary falcon (*Falco p. pelegrinoides*) breeding populations begun in 2020 in cooperation with local communities and falconers. Morocco reported that most birds rehabilitated at its two raptors recovery and rehabilitation centres are released to the wild. The United Kingdom's report also recorded an instructive negative outcome: the conservation breeding programme for hen harrier established by Natural England with the International Centre for Birds of Prey, intended to support the reintroduction of hen harrier to southern England, was concluded following a review, no fertile eggs having been produced between 2023 and 2025. Kenya mentioned plans for a programme of captive breeding for the reintroduction of the bearded vulture. Denmark, Hungary, the Netherlands and Slovakia reported that their conservation priorities focus on removing threats, reintroduction or restocking not being considered a priority.

8.3 Supplementary feeding

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); three answered “not known”.

Eight Signatories (31 per cent) reported supplementary feeding initiatives established and maintained for necrophagous birds of prey, fifteen answered “no”, and three answered “not known”. Spain described a joint national programme regulated by Royal Decree 1632/2011, integrating the sanitary provisions for animal by-products established at European Union level. Italy reported that its network of feeding stations remained broadly as described in the most recent national review, with only a limited number supplied regularly on a long-term basis. Hungary, Morocco and Saudi Arabia reported that feeding stations are maintained within protected areas. Kenya reported a single vulture restaurant at Mugie Conservancy, in operation since July 2023, a joint project of the conservancy, The Peregrine Fund, the Wildlife Research and Training Institute and the Kenya Wildlife Service. Zimbabwe described the “Vulture Culture” programme at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, where carcasses are placed daily at a designated site observed by visitors from a viewing platform. The United Kingdom noted that the red kite is its only primarily scavenging raptor, that feeding stations are not required to maintain its conservation status, and that several privately run stations nevertheless operate.

Taken together, the responses indicate that species-specific planning is more established than the resource-intensive interventions of reintroduction, restocking and supplementary feeding, which remain relatively limited across the MOU area.

9. Conservation and management of habitats and sites

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); one answered “not known”.

Twenty Signatories (77 per cent) reported measures implemented to improve or restore the habitats of birds of prey: 11 of 12 in Europe, 8 of 11 in Africa and 1 of 3 in Asia. As at MOS3, many responses referred principally to the existence and management of protected areas rather than to measures specifically targeted at raptors; this qualification should therefore be borne in mind when interpreting the result.

Among the more specific accounts, Belgium described the provision of semi-natural strips in arable fields through agri-environmental measures to improve foraging for Montagu’s and marsh harriers, and the improvement of reedbed quality and water levels. Burundi reported detailed vegetation mapping in Kibira and Rusizi National Parks under a joint project of the Burundian Office for Environmental Protection (OBPE), Enabel, the European Union and UNDP. Côte d’Ivoire reported the creation of five Voluntary Natural Reserves under Law No. 2002-102 of 11 February 2002, including the Tanoé-Ehy Marsh Forest, which serve as staging and wintering sites along migratory routes, together with the second phase of its Forest Investment Project, in force since 2022. Denmark reported interventions ranging from nesting

improvements for osprey to large-scale habitat restoration by the Danish Nature Agency. Hungary reported habitat restoration and habitat-management investments affecting a total of 73,000 hectares in the 2021–2027 EU budgetary period. Italy reported the insulation of 1,096 medium-voltage pylons for Egyptian vulture across Basilicata, Puglia, Calabria and Sicily, of which some 700 to 750 were completed within the reporting period, together with approximately 20 km of powerlines secured in Alpine and pre-Alpine Lombardy under LIFE IP GESTIRE 2020 and 19 km in Sardinia. Kenya reported forest restoration under the National Landscape and Ecosystem Restoration Strategy 2023–2032. Norway reported measures for Eurasian eagle-owl (*Bubo bubo*) including the clearing of vegetation at nest sites and the retention of old forest and tall trees, and the incorporation in 2019 of relevant requirements into the Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification (PEFC) Norwegian Forest Standard. The United Kingdom reported a series of peatland programmes, including England's Peat Action Plan, the Welsh National Peatland Action Programme 2025–2030 and the Northern Ireland Peatland Strategy to 2040, identifying hen harrier, merlin (*Falco columbarius*) and short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*) among the species benefiting from these programmes.

Responses to the question on the status of sites listed in Table 3 of the Action Plan were provided through the separate online file established for that purpose by the Coordinating Unit, and are not reproduced here. Germany's observation that the list for EU Member States includes both Special Protection Areas and Important Bird Areas, and that the German entry alone comprises over 900 sites, suggests that the question and the associated site list would benefit from further refinement to make reporting more manageable and the results more comparable across Signatories.

10. Assessing and responding to threats and pressures

10.1 Threat assessments

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); six answered "not known".

Sixteen Signatories (62 per cent) reported that assessments have been made of the nature, likelihood, severity or potential consequences of threats facing birds of prey. The regional contrast is marked: 11 of 12 European respondents answered "yes", compared with 5 of 11 in Africa and none of the three in Asia. Six respondents (Chad, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Niger, Somalia, Sweden and Tunisia) answered "not known", and four (Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, Saudi Arabia and Yemen) answered "no".

The approaches described vary considerably. Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and Spain all reported that threats are assessed through national reporting under Article 12 of the EU Birds Directive for the 2019–2024 period. Denmark and Norway referred to Red List processes and, in Norway's case, to the BirdLife Norway report Conservation of birds of prey in Norway - Guidelines and management priorities. Morocco reported that a threat analysis was carried out in the preparation of its national strategy, which sets out the resulting measures. Italy reported a systematic national assessment of anthropogenic and natural mortality commissioned by the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Security and carried out by Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA) in January 2026, covering 623 mortality events across 21 species. Kenya cited the published evidence of widespread declines in its raptor populations over a 40-year period. Uganda reported annual vulture counts in Kampala by NatureUganda and an assessment of Rüppell's vulture (*Gyps rueppelli*) at Luku Central Forest Reserve. Burundi reported that threats are assessed through protected-area management. The joint OBPE, Enabel, European Union and UNDP project in the Kibira and Rusizi National Parks integrates assessment of threats to key species through

monitoring of home ranges and ecological mapping. Zimbabwe reported structured assessments of raptor threats through BirdLife Zimbabwe, ZimParks and CMS processes, including stakeholder workshops held during its accession to the MOU between 2023 and 2025 which assessed the severity and likelihood of threats to migratory raptors.

10.2 The three most important categories of threat

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Respondents were asked to identify the three most important categories of threat affecting birds of prey in their country. Habitat destruction and degradation was selected by every one of the 26 Signatories, an unanimity not seen elsewhere in the format. Collisions and electrocution followed, selected by 14 Signatories (54 per cent), and climate change by 9 (35 per cent).

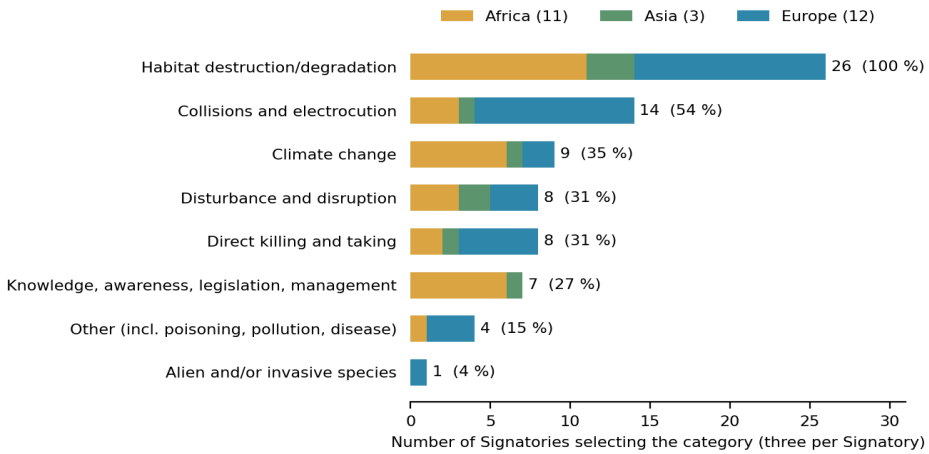


Figure 4: The three most important categories of threat, by region. Each Signatory selected three categories.

The regional distribution is instructive. Collisions and electrocution were selected by 10 of the 12 European respondents but by only 3 of the 11 African respondents, reflecting differences in the maturity and density of energy infrastructure. Climate change shows the inverse pattern: 6 of the 9 Signatories selecting it were African, and only 2 were European. The category concerning levels of knowledge, awareness, legislation and management was selected by 6 African respondents and by no European respondent, suggesting that, for African Signatories, gaps in the capacity and knowledge are experienced as a threat in their own right, rather than merely as obstacles to addressing other threats. Direct killing and taking was selected by 8 Signatories, five of them European. This finding suggests that implementation support in Africa may need to focus not only on addressing direct threats to raptors but also on strengthening institutional, technical and knowledge capacity to enable effective and sustained conservation action.

Five Signatories used the “other” category to specify a threat not otherwise listed: Switzerland and Zimbabwe cited poisoning, whether targeted or unintentional; Sweden cited pollution by lead and organic pollutants; the United Kingdom cited disease, referring in its report on avian influenza and the mitigation strategies adopted for England and Wales in 2026 and for Scotland in 2025; and Kenya cited energy infrastructure. Kenya’s response is treated in this synthesis, including in Figure 4, as falling within the category of collisions and electrocution, which Kenya had also selected.

Actions reported in response to these threats included: cooperation with electricity distribution companies in Hungary, Slovakia and Saudi Arabia, the latter reporting the insulation of hazardous medium-voltage powerlines at four sites and the conclusion of a memorandum of

understanding with the Ministry of Energy; the retrofitting of power poles in Kenya in collaboration with Kenya Power at Soysambu Conservancy, with the prospect of extension elsewhere, and the shutting down of a wind farm on demand; the renewal in 2025 of Italy's national Steering Committee on Illegal Killing of Birds and the adoption of its priority actions document; a dedicated Raptor Task Force in Denmark bringing together the police and environmental authorities; nest protection with buffer zones for white-tailed eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) and harriers in the Netherlands; and anti-deforestation and anti-charcoal patrols and community awareness work on agroforestry in Burundi. Zimbabwe reported that the CMS Guidelines to Prevent the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds are guiding its national anti-poisoning campaigns and ranger training, and that the CMS Energy Task Force informs its work on energy infrastructure.

10.3 Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Twenty-two Signatories (85 per cent) confirmed that requirements are in place to ensure that proposals for activities that may have significant effects on birds of prey or their habitats are subject to Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); four (Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Iran (Islamic Republic of) and Yemen) answered “not known”, and none answered “no”. All 12 European respondents and 9 of 11 African respondents answered “yes”. This is the only headline question in the format to which no Signatory returned a negative answer.

European respondents described the operation of the EU framework, Hungary noting that thresholds are lower in nationally protected and Natura 2000 sites so that smaller projects also trigger assessment. Outside the European Union, Saudi Arabia cited the Environment Law of 2020 and its implementing regulations; Zimbabwe the Environmental Management Act, Chapter 20:27, and its EIA Regulations; Kenya the Environmental Management and Coordination Act, Cap. 387, while noting that challenges remain in implementation; Niger cited Article 31 of its framework environmental law of 1998 and Law No. 2018-28, which regulate EIA for projects; and Burundi its 2001 order protecting wildlife read with its 2010 decree, under which a developer must identify affected species before proceeding. Tunisia's answer was particularly precise: there is no specific text requiring assessment for migratory species, but a provision of the Forest Code subjects any activity liable to cause environmental disturbance to assessment, and the standard template devotes a chapter to avifauna and raptors.

11. Action and integration across sectors

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting).

Asked whether the conservation of migratory birds of prey is integrated within the policies of sectors such as agriculture, forestry, energy, transport, waste and tourism, only 6 Signatories (23 per cent) answered “yes”. Seventeen answered “partly” and three “not known”; none answered “no”. This is the lowest unqualified positive response of any substantive question in the format, and the pattern is evident across all three regions, 10 of the 12 European respondents also answered “partly”.

The qualifications offered are revealing. Hungary observed that the EU Common Agricultural Policy integrates a number of “green” elements but still contributes to habitat loss and deterioration, and that nature conservation considerations must be taken into account in forest management planning although conflicts often remain. Spain reported that requirements are partly considered in forestry, waste, transport and tourism, but that agriculture in particular remains to be aligned. Morocco reported that raptor conservation is taken into account only indirectly, as a component of biodiversity generally, and Tunisia gave a similar answer.

Zimbabwe described integration as partial and not yet raptor-specific. Sweden's answer, “not per se but more or less”, conservation being implemented through other legislation, illustrates the difficulty some respondents had in distinguishing direct integration of raptor conservation from implementation through broader legislation and policies. Among those answering “yes”, Germany listed concrete measures across sectors including nest protection, adaptive cultivation, headway control for wind turbines, powerline marking and the prohibition of lead ammunition.

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); four answered “not known”.

On the related question of programmes implemented by government departments other than the lead department to inform decision makers of the conservation needs of migratory birds of prey, 9 Signatories (35 per cent) answered “yes”, 13 “no” and 4 “not known”. Denmark described its ongoing national raptor task force involving relevant authorities and the police; Saudi Arabia the memorandum of understanding concluded with the Ministry of Energy on powerline insulation; Kenya the Development Corridors Partnership and its inter-sectoral platform for policy influencers; Switzerland the development of its Forest Policy 2020 into an Integrated Forest and Wood Strategy 2050; and Burundi its ministerial coordination arrangements and its use of World Migratory Bird Day to convey the role of raptors in rodent control and as bio-indicators.

The relatively low positive response to this question, alongside the very low proportion answering “yes” to the sectoral-integration question, suggests that cross-government engagement remains one of the weakest aspects of implementation.

Taken together, the results on sectoral integration and inter-governmental engagement indicate that the conservation of migratory birds of prey remains insufficiently mainstreamed across government policies and decision-making processes. This represents a significant implementation challenge, given that many of the principal threats to raptors originate outside the environment sector.

12. Research, monitoring and information management

12.1 Population status and trends

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); one answered “not known”.

Twenty Signatories (77 per cent) reported that overall assessments have been made of the status and trends of populations of migratory birds of prey during the reporting period. All European respondents except Sweden answered “yes”, as did 7 of 11 African and 2 of 3 Asian respondents. This headline figure should nevertheless be read with some caution, since several respondents cited assessments or monitoring programmes of very limited scope, including Iran (Islamic Republic of), Libya and Somalia.

Several respondents highlighted significant changes. Germany reported that of the 18 MOU-listed species regularly breeding in the country, seven show a significant increase over the last 12 years: osprey, lesser spotted eagle, white-tailed eagle, red kite, black kite (*Milvus migrans*), common kestrel (*Falco tinnunculus*) and peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*). Belgium reported increases for marsh harrier, hen harrier, peregrine falcon and European honey buzzard under Article 12 reporting for 2019–2024. Italy reported that the 2021 Red List of Italian breeding birds recorded a genuine improvement for griffon vulture, while the osprey was assessed nationally for the first time in 2021 and classified as Critically Endangered following its recolonisation through the reintroduction programme begun in 2006. Switzerland reported continued concern for the peregrine falcon, whose numbers and breeding success at known sites remain depressed. Zimbabwe reported declines in white-backed (*Gyps*

africanus), hooded (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) and lappet-faced (*Torgos tracheliotos*) vultures consistent with regional Red List assessments, and Kenya cited published evidence of widespread declines across all vultures, secretarybird (*Sagittarius serpentarius*) and large eagles over 40 years.

The responses suggest that population assessments are now relatively well established in many responding Signatory States, although substantial differences remain in their geographic coverage, taxonomic scope and methodological consistency.

12.2 Systematic and coordinated monitoring

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); one answered “not known”.

Nineteen Signatories (73 per cent) reported systematic and coordinated monitoring programmes in relation to at least some breeding populations, reproductive success or migration counts: 11 of 12 in Europe, 7 of 11 in Africa and 1 of 3 in Asia. As with the population assessments reported in section 12.1, the programmes described range widely in coverage and intensity, and the headline figure should be read accordingly. Twelve Signatories (46 per cent) reported that guidelines or protocols concerning such monitoring have been published; here the regional gap is wider, 9 of 12 European respondents answering “yes” against 3 of 11 African respondents and none in Asia. This suggests that, while monitoring activities are relatively widespread, the use of standardised methodologies and published guidance remains less consistently developed, particularly outside Europe.

Examples ranged from long-established national schemes to targeted local efforts. Slovakia reported systematic monitoring of all raptor and owl species since 2018, using standardised methodologies at permanent sites at regular intervals. Hungary reported annual monitoring by national park directorates with BirdLife Hungary, published in the annual Heliaca. Germany described a suite of national programmes including common, rare, high-mountain and protected-area breeding bird monitoring, with protocols published online. Spain listed coordinated national censuses, the SACRE and SACIN programmes and bottleneck counts under the MIGRES programme at the Strait of Gibraltar. The United Kingdom described co-funded programmes including the BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey and, on protocols, the third edition of the Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme field guide. Zimbabwe reported the long-running Black Eagle Survey in the Matobo Hills, which has tracked the nesting success of Verreaux's eagle (*Aquila verreauxii*) over several decades. Uganda reported NatureUganda's work, supported by BirdLife Tokyo, on Rüppell's vulture at Luku Central Forest Reserve, and described its own count protocol. Italy, by contrast, reported that no fully coordinated national programme for raptor monitoring is operated and that long-term monitoring is carried out on many priority species by NGOs, protected areas, universities and regional and national institutions. Burundi described monitoring as partial, the only data coming from eco-guards using SMART Mobile since 2024, with three nesting sites mapped but no annual population monitoring.

12.3 Research priorities and knowledge exchange

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting) on both questions; three answered “not known” on research priorities and two on platforms.

Fourteen Signatories (54 per cent) reported that a process exists for establishing multi-stakeholder agreement about research priorities. Notably, this is one of the few questions in the reporting format on which the African response (7 of 11) exceeded the European (6 of 12) in proportional terms. The Netherlands described the Ecological Monitoring Network as the state-backed framework uniting the responsible ministry, the statistical office and the monitoring organisations; Kenya described the Bird Committee of the East Africa Natural

History Society and the National Bird Task Force; Norway described a multi-stakeholder advisory group for the Eurasian eagle-owl; Morocco reported that its national raptor conservation strategy defines research priorities for the coming decade; and Zimbabwe described the ZimParks Research Strategy as the institutional framework. Niger acknowledged that a process exists but has not yet been activated.

Fourteen Signatories (54 per cent) reported suitable platforms in place to exchange knowledge, experience and information. Italy described the National Biodiversity Network infrastructure adopted by the Ministry for the Environment and Energy Security; Germany listed the Working Group on Bird Conservation of the Länder bird conservation stations; Hungary reported two annual conferences and the Heliaca publication; and Niger cited both the West African Bird DataBase (WABDaB) platform and informal messaging groups. Ten Signatories answered “no”, among them the United Kingdom, which stated that platforms are not adequate for birds of prey generally although arrangements exist for particular conservation issues, and Iran (Islamic Republic of), which reported that a messaging group had been created but is not very active.

Taken together, the responses indicate that population assessment and monitoring activities are relatively well established across much of the MOU area, particularly in Europe. However, the lower response rates for published monitoring protocols, research-priority processes and knowledge-exchange platforms suggest that coordination, standardisation and information-sharing remain less consistently developed.

13. Raising awareness and strengthening capacity

> **Response rate:** 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting) on the two awareness-related questions (public awareness programmes, and education programmes for young people and students); one answered “not known” on awareness and three on education.

Twenty-one Signatories (81 per cent) reported public awareness programmes implemented during the reporting period, and 18 (69 per cent) reported education programmes or teaching resources for young people and students. On education, the African response (9 of 11, 82 per cent) was proportionally the strongest of the three regions, exceeding the European (7 of 12, 58 per cent).

The responses demonstrated a wide variety of awareness-raising approaches. World Migratory Bird Day and International Vulture Awareness Day featured in the responses of Burundi, Kenya, Norway and Zimbabwe. The important role of non-governmental organisations was a recurring feature of these responses: Tunisia, for instance, described the awareness-raising effort of NGOs as considerable, with several campaigns conducted, and Switzerland attributed the success of its awareness work to the academic community and non-governmental organisations, including the Swiss Ornithological Institute, BirdLife Switzerland and Nos Oiseaux. The Netherlands described the Year of the Kestrel campaign in 2025, which mobilised citizens and schools to build nest boxes and map common kestrel populations, while noting that its impact is difficult to quantify, and its “experience spring” school modules built around live nest webcams. Morocco reported that its vulture rehabilitation centre at Jbel Moussa and its raptor recovery centre at Bir Lahmer play an important awareness role through their annual visitors. Somalia reported the involvement of indigenous communities, traditional leaders, youth and women. Burundi described presentations in secondary schools around Kigwena, Vyanda and Rumonge, in which migratory raptors such as black kite, common buzzard (*Buteo buteo*) and common kestrel are introduced.

> **Response rate:** 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting) on the two capacity-building questions (training for agencies applying relevant laws, and support to local communities and voluntary groups); three answered “not known” on agency training and four on community support.

Fifteen Signatories (58 per cent) reported training or other support programmes to strengthen the capacity of agencies responsible for applying relevant laws and regulations, and 14 (54 per cent) reported training or other initiatives supporting local communities or voluntary groups.

The scale of some of this work is considerable. Kenya reported that 467 law enforcement officers from multiple agencies in the Laikipia ecosystem were trained between 2023 and 2025 on the law governing wildlife poisoning, and that 500 community conservancy rangers and scouts in the Amboseli and Maasai Mara ecosystems were trained between 2022 and 2023 on rapid response to poisoning incidents. Italy reported that approximately 200 Carabinieri Forestali, a third of them officers commanding environmental, forestry and CITES units, were trained in investigative techniques. Spain reported at least 25 coordinated training courses against the use of poison baits, organised by the Ministry for the Ecological Transition, the autonomous communities and NGOs. Saudi Arabia reported workshops, technical training courses and knowledge-exchange events for the personnel and institutions responsible for implementing environmental legislation and wildlife conservation regulations, including a regional workshop organised by the National Center for Wildlife in April 2025 on the Kingdom's experience in hunting regulation. Uganda reported intensive workshops by the Uganda Police Force and the Centre for Basic Research to strengthen analytical, forensic and investigative capabilities, together with initiatives to increase the capacity of the Uganda Wildlife Authority Canine Unit and the National Wildlife Crime Coordination Task Force to intercept wildlife crime. Burundi reported the distribution in 2024 of a simplified aide-mémoire on protected species and sanctions for judicial police officers, with two pages annexed on raptors. Morocco reported training sessions for forest officers, the Royal Gendarmerie and the police. Belgium described annual training by local volunteer groups on the detection and protection of nests of raptors breeding in agricultural fields, with results shared after the breeding season, and Slovakia and Hungary each described occasional volunteer courses covering species identification, the rescue of injured specimens, site management and monitoring.

Taken together, the responses indicate that awareness-raising and education activities are widely implemented across the MOU area and often benefit from strong support from non-governmental organisations, research institutions and local communities. Capacity-building activities are also well represented, although the lower response rates suggest that strengthening institutional and technical capacity remains an area where further effort may be needed.

14. Resources and international cooperation

14.1 Resources provided and received

> **Response rate:** 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting) on both questions; three answered "not known" on resources provided and six on resources received.

Fourteen Signatories (54 per cent) reported that new financial or other resources had been provided nationally for conservation activities specifically benefiting migratory birds of prey, and eight (31 per cent) that new resources had been received. The regional disparity is pronounced: 9 of 12 European respondents reported providing resources, against 3 of 11 African respondents, six of whom answered "no" and two "not known". The results also suggest that implementation continues to rely heavily on domestic resources and project-based external funding, rather than on sustained and dedicated funding streams for raptor conservation.

Among those providing resources, Sweden reported a voluntary annual contribution in support of the Raptors MOU programme of work; Germany reported the establishment of a new

National Species Recovery Programme; Hungary and Slovakia reported government co-financing of EU LIFE projects; the United Kingdom reported continuous funding for the National Wildlife Crime Unit, including £530,000 for 2026/27; Norway reported support to scientists and NGOs for knowledge acquisition, research and equipment; Iran (Islamic Republic of) reported a fund allocated to the NGO counting migratory raptors at the Galougah bottleneck; and Burundi reported the recruitment of eco-guards and their equipment with GPS units, cameras, camera traps and drones. Among those receiving resources, Italy listed four LIFE Programme projects by name, Kenya identified The Peregrine Fund and Nature Kenya as supporters of the Vulture Multi-species Action Plan, Morocco identified IUCN-Med as a partner in its national strategy, and Belgium reported support for the Walloon multi-species harrier plan through the LIFE BNIP project. Spain, in respect of both questions, reported that it was not possible to specify the amounts given the volume of investment from different authorities, NGOs and other stakeholders.

The comparatively low proportion of Signatories reporting the receipt of dedicated resources highlights the continuing need for increased international cooperation, donor engagement and resource mobilisation to support implementation, particularly in developing countries.

14.2 International cooperation

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); five answered “not known”.

Fifteen Signatories (58 per cent) reported participation in international cooperation activities as provided by paragraph 8 of the MOU. As at MOS3, few responses referred to paragraph 8 as such, and the activities described covered a wide range of forms of cooperation:

- participation in the processes of the CMS Family and other multilateral environmental agreements: Switzerland referred to CMS, CBD, CITES and IPBES; Burundi to the Conferences of the Parties to those instruments and to a SMART Mobile training workshop in the United Republic of Tanzania in 2024; Zimbabwe to CMS COP15; and Kenya and Niger to their attendance at MOS3;
- multi-country projects and research collaboration: Italy reported that EU LIFE co-funded projects with partners in other Range States provided the primary framework for its cooperation, and that ISPRA contributed to an international multi-country GPS study; the Netherlands reported involvement in GPS tracking studies and its seat on the Technical Advisory Group of the MOU, through which Dutch scientists provide technical input; and Belgium reported international exchange of research experience;
- species-specific and transboundary cooperation: Hungary reported a volunteer mission by BirdLife Hungary to help safeguard a red-footed falcon wintering and migration hotspot in Angola; Morocco reported close cooperation with the Spanish authorities on research into the mortality of GPS-tracked birds; Kenya reported engagement with Ethiopia on the donation of breeding pairs of bearded vultures for restocking; Norway reported participation in international working groups on golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) and snowy owl (*Bubo scandiacus*); Spain reported assistance to reintroduction projects for Bonelli's eagle (*Aquila fasciata*) in Italy, griffon vulture in France and Bulgaria and other species, and capacity-building in Latin America; and Zimbabwe reported cross-border collaboration on vulture and eagle conservation with Botswana, Namibia and Zambia through the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area; and
- law enforcement cooperation: the United Kingdom reported that the National Wildlife Crime Unit leads and supports international operations on illegal wildlife trade and that its head chairs the INTERPOL Wildlife Crime Working Group.

The responses demonstrate that international cooperation under the Raptors MOU is occurring through multiple channels, including multilateral processes, scientific collaboration, species conservation initiatives and law-enforcement partnerships.

14.3 Encouraging other Range States to sign the MOU

Response rate: 26 Signatories (100 per cent of those reporting); five answered "not known".

Only five Signatories (19 per cent) reported having taken steps during the reporting period to support or encourage other Range States to sign the MOU. Kenya identified South Sudan, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda, and described using bilateral channels to encourage them; Uganda identified South Sudan; Saudi Arabia reported encouragement through regional cooperation activities, workshops, technical meetings and engagement with Gulf States; and Chad expressed the view that African countries should sign in order to benefit from greater financing. Given that 65 of the 131 Range States of the MOU have yet to sign, and that the five accessions during the reporting period were from Asia (3) and Africa (2), this remains an area where further efforts could yield tangible results.

Taken together, the responses indicate that international cooperation remains a comparatively strong aspect of implementation, while access to dedicated financial resources remains more uneven. Strengthening resource mobilisation and expanding participation in the MOU therefore remain important priorities for enhancing implementation across the flyway.

15. Reporting by Cooperating Partners

Response rate: Report received from one of the MOU's five Cooperating Partners, the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group.

Cooperating Partners were invited to report on their contribution to the implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan using a dedicated report form, structured to correspond with the form completed by Signatories. One report was received, from the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group (VSG). The CMS Secretariat, as a Cooperating Partner, submits its reports directly to the Meetings of Signatories and of the Technical Advisory Group. Participation was accordingly lower than for the trial run considered at MOS3, when four of the five Cooperating Partners reported. Given the important role of Cooperating Partners in supporting implementation across the flyway, MOS4 may wish to consider how their engagement in the reporting process could be strengthened in future reporting cycle. The report of the Vulture Specialist Group is nonetheless a substantive contribution, and its main elements are summarised below.

15.1 Successes, difficulties and future priorities

Among the most successful aspects of implementation during the period, the VSG highlighted the completion of the mid-term implementation review of the CMS Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP) and the submission of the resulting report to CMS COP14 in February 2024; the continued functioning of the CMS Vulture Working Group despite a lack of resources; the significant input provided by its members to the Technical Advisory Group of the MOU, on which several members currently serve; and its close cooperation with the Coordinating Unit in engaging the World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) on the threat posed by non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), culminating in a joint publication on the matter.

The difficulties it identified align closely with those reported by Signatories. By far the most significant was described as the limited success in securing funding to support implementation of the Vulture MsAP since its adoption in 2017. VSG also observed that the Raptors MOU itself has struggled to secure the resources needed to convene more meetings of the

Technical Advisory Group, with continuity largely dependent on virtual meetings, and that Range States have been hesitant to commit resources to these processes. Staff turnover and continuity were raised as a further concern: long delays in the appointment of staff, in particular of the Head of the Coordinating Unit, were considered to have resulted in a loss of momentum, a concern that persists given that the tenure of the current incumbent concludes at the end of 2026.

Looking ahead, the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group (VSG) identified as its main priorities the review and update of the Vulture MsAP, to be tabled at CMS COP16 in 2029, and the securing of at least the minimum viable resources to support the Coordinating Unit and its associated activities, including the Vulture MsAP.

The priorities identified by VSG closely mirror those highlighted by Signatories elsewhere in this report, particularly the need for sustainable financing, continuity of implementation and strengthened institutional support.

15.2 Conservation strategies and species action plans

The Group reported cooperation in the development of the West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan (2023–2043), covering all West African Range States, and in the development of the SADC Vulture Conservation Strategy, covering 14 SADC Range States. The VSG noted that both are at very early stages of implementation. VSG was a drafting partner of the Vulture MsAP and remains involved in its implementation through the work of its members and its support for the CMS Vulture Working Group. It also reported promoting the use of supplementary feeding for necrophagous birds of prey, under appropriate circumstances, throughout the flyway.

15.3 Threats, research and monitoring

Addressing the key threats affecting vultures across the flyway is the primary focus of the Vulture MsAP. The Group identified collisions and electrocution, habitat destruction and degradation, and poisoning in its various forms as the three most important categories of threat, an assessment consistent with the pattern reported by Signatories in section 10.2. This convergence between the findings of Signatories and those of the VSG provides additional confidence in the overall picture of threats emerging from the reporting process. On the status and trends of populations, it drew attention to the downlisting of the Cape vulture (*Gyps coprotheres*) to Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, on the basis of a stable to increasing population across its range. It has also been involved in publishing guidance on monitoring methods, including a best practice guide for the harnessing of vultures for tracking.

15.4 Awareness, education, training and cooperation

International Vulture Awareness Day is held annually under the auspices of VSG, with events in 41 countries in 2025. Its Wildlife Poisoning Management Training has been delivered to more than 7,500 learners in 24 countries in Africa, as well as in Cambodia. While the Group has no financial resources of its own to provide, it emphasised the substantial time contributed by its members to a range of initiatives in support of the MOU, and it reported receiving new resources during the period for projects focused on vultures across the flyway. Most of its activities are directed at supporting international cooperation for the conservation of vultures, consistent with paragraph 8 of the MOU, and it has promoted the signing of the MOU across the range, including through participation in signing events such as that for Uganda in 2025.

16. Conclusions and observations on the reporting process

The successful completion of this first full reporting cycle using the reporting format adopted by MOS3 represents an important milestone in the implementation of the Raptors MOU. It provides the most comprehensive assessment to date of progress in implementing the MOU and its Action Plan and establishes an increasingly robust baseline against which future progress can be measured.

The results of this first full reporting cycle broadly confirm the picture that emerged from the trial run, while allowing a more secure reading of it. Legal and procedural foundations are in place across most of the reporting Signatories: 96 per cent have legislation against exposed poison baits, 85 per cent have environmental assessment requirements, and 77 per cent afford full legal protection to Annex 1 species and have implemented habitat measures. Measures that depend on dedicated planning, sustained resources or engagement beyond the environment sector remain markedly weaker: 46 per cent have a raptor strategy or equivalent, 42 per cent have published species action plans, 35 per cent have engaged other government departments, 31 per cent have received dedicated resources, and only 23 per cent regard raptor conservation as fully integrated within sectoral policies.

The regional analysis introduced in this cycle adds an important dimension. The near-threefold increase in the African response rate, from 15 per cent to 38 per cent of Signatories, is the most encouraging development of the period, and it is accompanied by substantive African engagement on awareness, education and multi-stakeholder research priorities, on each of which the African response was proportionally at least as strong as the European. At the same time, the African responses consistently identify limitations in capacity and knowledge as constituting a threat in their own right and report the lowest levels of dedicated resourcing. The decline in the Asian response rate, from 36 per cent to 21 per cent, is a matter for attention, particularly given the accession of three Central Asian Signatories during the period.

The reports also confirm the enduring nature of the principal constraints, funding and technical capacity, and the salience of habitat loss, energy-infrastructure mortality and, increasingly, climate change as threats to birds of prey. These findings, and the trends that will emerge as reporting continues, provide a sound basis for prioritising future action and cooperation under the MOU. The increasing participation of Signatories in the reporting process also strengthens the evidence base available to MOS and the Technical Advisory Group for assessing implementation and identifying priorities.

The reporting process is designed to capture the contribution of Cooperating Partners as well as of Signatories. The receipt of only one Cooperating Partner’s report, compared with four in the trial run, suggests that the means of engaging Cooperating Partners in the reporting cycle merit attention. MOS4 may wish to invite the Coordinating Unit to consult Cooperating Partners on the timing, format and reporting burden ahead of the next cycle. The substantive contribution of the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group, not least its observations on the resourcing of the Coordinating Unit and of the Vulture MsAP, reinforces conclusions drawn elsewhere in this synthesis from the National Reports.

A longer perspective reinforces these conclusions. The interim questionnaire reported to MOS2 in 2015, completed by 17 Signatories, found essentially the same pattern: legal protection of listed species (82 per cent) and EIA requirements (94 per cent) were already widespread, while national strategies, species action plans, reintroduction and restocking, supplementary feeding and cross-sectoral integration lagged well behind, and shortages of funding and expertise were repeatedly cited. Although the reporting instruments differ and comparisons are therefore indicative only, meaningful progress over the intervening decade is discernible: legislation against exposed poison baits has risen from 76 per cent of respondents at MOS2 to 96 per cent in the present cycle, reported reintroduction or restocking activity from 13 per cent to 31 per cent, and systematic and coordinated monitoring from 56 per cent to 73 per cent, while participation in reporting has grown from 12 Signatories at MOS1 and 17 at MOS2 to 20 at MOS3 and 26 in the present cycle. At the same time, the persistence of the same principal constraints across three subsequent reporting rounds suggests that the question posed to MOS2, of what mechanisms can be developed to support implementation

by Signatories, remains as pertinent now as it was then, particularly with regard to resourcing and capacity outside Europe.

Overall, the results demonstrate continued commitment by Signatories to the conservation of migratory birds of prey and provide evidence of tangible progress across a range of areas. At the same time, they highlight persistent challenges relating to resourcing, technical capacity, cross-sectoral engagement and emerging threats. Addressing these challenges through strengthened cooperation, targeted capacity-building and sustained investment will be critical to achieving the objectives of the Raptors MOU and its Action Plan during the next intersessional period.

As with the trial run, the individual National Reports contain a wealth of detail beyond what can be captured in this synthesis, and their continued use is encouraged. A number of refinements to the format and its guidance would improve the consistency and comparability of future cycles, in particular:

- distinguishing more clearly, in the question on sectoral integration, between the existence of a legal duty and its practical application, since the very high proportion of “partly” answers suggests the present formulation does not discriminate well;
- encouraging the use of the “not known” option only where information is genuinely unavailable, and encouraging complete responses, since 6 of 26 Signatories answered “not known” on threat assessments and 7 on resources received.

Annex 1

List of Signatories submitting National Reports

Twenty-six Signatories submitted National Reports for this reporting cycle, as listed below by region. Figures in brackets give the number of reports received as a proportion of the Signatories in the region concerned.

AFRICA (11 of 29 Signatories; 38 %)

Burundi
Chad
Côte d'Ivoire
Kenya
Libya
Morocco
Niger
Somalia
Tunisia
Uganda
Zimbabwe

ASIA (3 of 14 Signatories; 21 %)

Iran (Islamic Republic of)
Saudi Arabia
Yemen

EUROPE (12 of 23 Signatories; 52 %)

Belgium
Denmark
Germany
Hungary
Italy
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)
Norway
Slovakia
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Annex 2

Summary results matrix

The table below summarises the responses to each headline question. Percentages are calculated against the 26 reporting Signatories. Rows do not always sum to 26 where a question was not applicable to all respondents or where no answer was given.

Headline question	Yes	Partly / In prep.	No	Not known / no answer	% Yes
Raptor conservation strategies and equivalent documents					
National and/or regional raptor strategy or equivalent exists	12	3	12	0	**46 %**
Strategy addresses all Table 2 activities of the Action Plan	7	12	7	0	**27 %**
Legal protection					
All Annex 1 species fully protected from deliberate killing/taking	20	5	1	0	**77 %**
Legislation banning exposed poison baits and toxic control methods	25	n/a	0	1	**96 %**
Species action plans and species-specific measures					
Single or Multi-species Action Plans published	11	4	10	1	**42 %**
Reintroduction or restocking projects implemented	8	n/a	16	2	**31 %**
Supplementary feeding initiatives established	8	n/a	15	3	**31 %**
Habitats and sites					
Habitat improvement or restoration measures implemented	20	n/a	5	1	**77 %**
Threats, pressures and impact assessment					
Threat assessments undertaken	16	n/a	4	6	**62 %**
EIA/SEA requirements in place	22	n/a	0	4	**85 %**
Action and integration across sectors					
Raptor conservation integrated within sectoral policies	6	17	0	3	**23 %**
Cross-government programmes for decision makers	9	n/a	13	4	**35 %**
Research, monitoring and information management					
Population status and trends assessed	20	n/a	5	1	**77 %**
Systematic and coordinated monitoring programmes operated	19	n/a	6	1	**73 %**
Monitoring guidelines or protocols published	12	n/a	11	3	**46 %**
Multi-stakeholder process for research priorities	14	n/a	9	3	**54 %**
Knowledge-exchange platforms in place	14	n/a	10	2	**54 %**
Awareness, education and capacity					
Public awareness programmes implemented	21	n/a	4	1	**81 %**
Education programmes or teaching resources provided	18	n/a	5	3	**69 %**
Training for agencies applying relevant laws	15	n/a	8	3	**58 %**

Headline question	Yes	Partly / In prep.	No	Not known / no answer	% Yes
Support to local communities and voluntary groups	14	n/a	8	4	**54 %**
Resources and international cooperation					
New resources provided for raptor conservation	14	n/a	9	3	**54 %**
New resources received for raptor conservation	8	n/a	12	6	**31 %**
International cooperation activities (paragraph 8 of the MOU)	15	n/a	6	5	**58 %**
Steps taken to encourage other Range States to sign	5	n/a	16	5	**19 %**

Table 2: Summary of responses to the headline questions of the reporting format (n = 26).

The first row is the one case in which the responses sum to more than 26: one Signatory (Tunisia) selected both "yes" and "in preparation" in respect of a strategy or equivalent document, and is counted under both headings, as explained in section 6. "n/a" indicates that the option was not offered for the question concerned.