



Memorandum of Understanding
on the Conservation of
Migratory Birds of Prey in
Africa and Eurasia

Distribution: General
UNEP/CMS/Raptors/TAG4/Doc.3.2

2 November 2021

Fourth Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group | *Online, 13-15 December 2021*

REPORT FROM THE COORDINATING UNIT

Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU

1. Since its third meeting (12 – 14 December 2018), there have been several developments led by the Coordinating Unit to support the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and the implementation of the Raptors MOU.
2. Several staff changes occurred over the reporting period. Following the departure of the Associate Programme Management Officer in December 2018, an Individual Contractor was hired to facilitate the Coordinating Unit's work. The Head of the Coordinating Unit resigned in February 2020 and the Coordinating Unit's work was led by the Executive Coordinator of CMS Office – Abu Dhabi. The new Associate Programme Management Officer started in February 2020 and the new Head of the Coordinating Unit in March 2021. Despite the changes and fluctuations in staff, the Coordinating Unit has continued to support Signatories and the TAG as well as undertaking species-specific activities.
3. Outreach to Signatories during the reporting period resulted in the number of Signatories increasing to 61 with the signing of the MOU by Jordan (2019) and Ethiopia (2020). In keeping with the decision of the Second Meeting of Signatories (2015), voluntary contributions were received from Hungary, Slovak Republic and Sweden. The contributions of these three signatories complemented the core support provided to the Raptors MOU since 2009 by Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates. Further contributions have been pledged in 2021.
4. The Coordinating Unit engaged with BirdLife International and a consultant to provide technical support and advance the TAG work plan in view of TAG's fourth meeting and in preparation for the Third Meeting of Signatories (MOS3) in the third quarter of 2022. Activities undertaken include:
 - Producing a review of the MOU and its Action Plan¹;
 - Updating the list of species and their classification;
 - Conceptualising and delivering a conservation status assessment report for Raptor MOU species;
 - Updating the list of important sites;
 - Developing and testing the reporting forms for signatories and cooperating partners; and
 - Inviting Signatories to consider hosting MOS3.
5. Following up on the survey undertaken in 2018 and a subsequent call for applications for support, the Coordinating Unit took initial steps to advance the development of national and regional raptor conservation strategies by offering financial support for and participating in the Pakistan

¹ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/first-review-raptors-mou-action-plan-april-2020>

National Raptor Conservation Strategy workshop (January 2020). A new webpage on the Raptors MOU website² was also published to showcase Raptor Conservation Strategies & Action Plans.

6. There has been ongoing coordination of the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) and the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) including by:

- Facilitating a side event on the SakerGAP at CMS COP13 (February 2020);
- Convening the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh meetings of the STF throughout 2020;
- Facilitating the work of two discussion groups set up by the STF on addressing electrocution and developing an Adaptive Management Framework for the sustainable use of Saker Falcons; and
- Developing Terms of Reference for three short-term consultants to support the work of the STF and its Discussion Groups.

7. The Coordinating Unit has continued to support the implementation of the African-Eurasian Vultures Multi-species Action Plan (Vultures MsAP) including by:

- Facilitating two side events at CMS COP13 on the threat of poisoning and NSAIDs for vultures (February 2020);
- Publishing the Vulture MsAP Strategic Implementation Plan (February 2020);
- Providing financial support to the Egyptian Vulture New LIFE project including supporting and presenting at a successful session to promote the Vulture MsAP at the European Vulture Conference hosted by Vulture Conservation Foundation in Portugal (1 – 4 October 2019);
- Supporting and presenting at the workshop to develop a roadmap to tackle illegal bird killing in the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq and Iran held in Jordan (24-28 October 2021);
- Offering financial and technical support to implement training on how to address poisoning accidents in Guinea Bissau;
- Collaborating with the CITES Secretariat on and organizing financial support for the WCMC Review on Trade and Sentinel Poisoning on West Africa for the CITES West African Vultures process;
- Contributing to the CITES 31st meeting of the Animals Committee in drafting proposed draft decisions for the 19th meeting of CITES Standing Committee in line with the Vulture MsAP as the outcomes of the work of the CITES West African Vultures process; and
- Convening an NSAIDs Working Group established by TAG to gather information on licensing NSAIDs and raise awareness through a fact sheet.

8. In addition, as the Steppe Eagle was identified as a priority species at the previous meeting of TAG, a survey was circulated in November 2019 to 87 Steppe Eagle Range States and Signatories seeking views on the development of an International Single Species Action Plan for the species. There was wide support for the development of a plan, however no offer of voluntary financial support has been made to date to take this forward.

9. For the Sooty Falcon, the Coordinating Unit has started the process towards the finalization of the Sooty Falcon Action Plan and the re-establishment of the Sooty Falcon Working Group.

10. Other cross-cutting initiatives that the Coordinating Unit has participated in include actions on poisoning, illegal killing and bird safe power infrastructure including participating in meetings of the CMS Energy Task Force and the Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT). In addition, a cooperative framework was developed

² <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/documents/national-regional-strategies>

with the newly appointed CMS Ambassador for avian species for collaboration on her expeditions including the Round Britain Climate Challenge and the future Flight of the Osprey.

11. Finally, regular reports to CMS meetings including the Scientific Council, Standing Committee and COP were made.

Action requested:

TAG is requested to take note of this report.