



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

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RAPTOR CONSERVATION STRATEGIES

Prepared by Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU

Introduction

1. The overall aim of the Raptors MOU¹ is to ensure that all populations of African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey (including owls) are maintained in, or returned to, a favourable conservation status within the meaning of Article 1(c) of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)². The Action Plan of the Raptors MOU (Annex 3)³ contains an Implementation Framework (Table 2) which establishes priority activities to be undertaken by Signatories to deliver the overall aim outlined above.
2. Pursuant to paragraph 12 of the Raptor MOU it was envisaged that this Action Plan would be translated into National or Regional (e.g. EU) strategies or equivalent documents (e.g. Single Species Action Plans) for category 1 and, where appropriate, category 2 species in Table 1 in the Action Plan, and that Signatories would prepare and submit these to the Coordinating Unit within two years of signing the Raptors MOU.
3. It is implicit in the text of the MOU that translation of the Action Plan into National or Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies, or equivalent documents, is an important step to ensuring effective implementation of the Raptors MOU.
4. In an effort to assist Signatories to meet this critically important obligation, and to encourage a harmonised approach, the Coordinating Unit published detailed Guidelines for Preparing National or Regional Raptor Conservation and Management Strategies⁴ in June 2012.
5. In addition, the Vulture Multispecies Action Plan (VMsAP)⁵, the VMsAP Strategic Implementation Plan⁶ and the Saker Global Action Plan⁷ provide a framework for Signatories to consider when developing their National or Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies. Other documents that can be used as guidance on how to address specific threats include the CMS Guidelines to Prevent

¹ <http://cms.int/raptors/en/page/agreement-text>

² <http://cms.int/en/convention-text>

³ http://cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/raptors-mou_annex3_action-plan_e.pdf

⁴ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/publication/guidelines-preparing-national-or-regional-raptor-conservation-and-management-strategies>

⁵ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/publication/multi-species-action-plan-protect-african- Eurasian-vultures-vulture-msap-cms-technical>

⁶ <https://www.cms.int/en/publication/vulture-msap-strategic-implementation-plan-report-implementation-date-cms-technical>

⁷ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/publication/saker-falcon-falco-cherrug-global-action-plan-sakergap>

the Risk of Poisoning to Migratory Birds⁸, and documents produced or made available by the CMS Energy Task Force⁹, and by the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean¹⁰ (MIKT).

Status of National and Regional Strategies

6. Signatories have been kept aware of their responsibility to develop National or Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies and the Coordinating Unit has tracked the progress through specific questionnaires (February 2018, August 2018, June 2019) or through informal national reporting questionnaires prior to MOS1 and MOS2. Annex A to this document details the latest information available to the Coordinating Unit regarding the development of National and Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies and Action Plans. The new National Reporting Form that Signatories are expected to complete by the end of October 2021 will enable further reporting on the status of National or Regional Strategies prior to MOS3.

7. Three Signatories have prepared dedicated National Raptor Conservation Strategies for all raptors occurring within their territories: the Czech Republic, Norway¹¹ and Switzerland¹². While eight Signatories have indicated in their most recent reply to any of the questionnaires that they were working toward the preparation of a National Raptor Conservation Strategy.

8. The European Union (EU), another MOU signatory, developed its Strategic Approach to Raptor Conservation in December 2019¹³. The Strategy describes how raptor conservation within the EU is being implemented through existing EU frameworks, particularly the EU Birds Directive, and clarifies in its conclusions that “some activities in this document have been defined rather broadly, thus the EU Member States are encouraged to develop their national strategies and action plans to further identify and establish the required activities at the necessary detail at national and regional levels”.

9. Three Signatories, Angola, Germany and Pakistan, have indicated that their raptor conservation strategy is incorporated in their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity. NBSAPs cover a broad range of biodiversity targets, that will indirectly benefit raptors, however it is not clear to what extent such documents identify specific objectives, targets and actions that can effectively influence the conservation status of species covered under the Raptors MOU.

10. The development of National (Single or Multi) Species Action Plans is an important contribution to the implementation of the Raptors MOU. India has developed a National Action Plan for Vulture Conservation, Portugal has developed an Action Plan to conserve necrophagous birds which are mostly raptors, and South Africa is in the process of completing its National Vulture Conservation Strategy. Madagascar developed an action plan covering both the Sooty and Eleonora's falcons.

11. Seven Signatories reported the existence of a total of 13 National Single Species Action Plans for migratory birds of prey. France has developed seven Single Species Actions Plans, Finland has developed two action plans while Luxembourg, Slovakia, Sweden and the United Kingdom have developed one Single Species Action Plan each. In Germany, two Regional Single Species Action Plans exist covering the Peregrine Falcon and White-tailed Eagle.

⁸<https://www.cms.int/en/document/guidelines-prevent-risk-poisoning-migratory-birds-unepecmscop11doc2312annex2>

⁹<https://www.cms.int/en/taskforce/energy-task-force>

¹⁰ [Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean | CMS](https://www.cms.int/en/document/conservation-birds-prey-norway)

¹¹ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/conservation-birds-prey-norway>

¹² <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/raptor-and-owl-conservation-switzerland>

¹³ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/eus-strategic-approach-raptor-conservation>

Support to Signatories

12. The Coordinating Unit wrote to Signatories in August 2018 seeking details of the most cost-effective ways it could assist Signatories to develop their National or Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies. Eleven Signatories responded to the call by submitting applications for support. The Coordinating Unit had set aside some financial resources to support Signatories to develop their National or Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies. Support was pledged to Pakistan who hosted a national workshop toward the development of a National Raptor Conservation Strategy in January 2020. The departure of the former Head of the Coordinating Unit at the start of 2020, as well as travel and meeting restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulted in no support being provided to the other Signatories that had requested assistance, and there are now competing priorities within the Raptors MOU programme of work for the limited financial resources available.

13. At the Third Meeting of TAG in 2018, the lack of National or Regional Raptors Conservation Strategies was discussed and suggestions were put forward including: (i) sharing the existing strategies as models for other countries and (ii) the development of guidance about existing practical tools such as guidelines developed by the Energy Task Force, the Preventing Poisoning Working Group and the MIKT, and (iii) holding a special session at MOS where countries that have developed their national strategies could share their experience. TAG concluded that it “would be valuable to prepare a short document with raptor conservation success stories, as a source of inspiration to those preparing conservation strategies”. The recommendation was implemented by posting news articles on the Raptors MOU and CMS webpages and by having three signatories, Norway, South Africa and Switzerland sharing their experiences on the development and implementation of national strategies and plans as well as Dr David Stroud sharing the lessons learnt from the CMS African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement at the Fourth Meeting of TAG.

Role of TAG

14. Paragraph 1, of the Terms of Reference¹⁴ (TOR) for TAG, states that the purpose of the TAG is to serve and assist the Signatories in the effective implementation of the Raptors MOU, including the Action Plan. Paragraph 4 of the TOR outlines that one of the main tasks of TAG is to provide expert advice, information and make recommendations on the implementation of the Raptors MOU to the Signatories and the Coordinating Unit as requested. Paragraph 3 of the TOR, states that the Coordinating Unit serves to receive and transmit requests from the Signatories for advice from the TAG.

Action requested

TAG is requested to take note of this report and to provide advice regarding: (i) how TAG and its members could best support Signatories in the development and implementation of their National Raptor Conservation Strategies; and (ii) the extent to which the Coordinating Unit should continue to prioritise in its work programme support to Signatories to assist the development of their National Raptor Conservation Strategies.

¹⁴ <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/terms-reference-technical-advisory-group-cms-raptors-mou>

Annex A: Summary of National and Regional Raptor Conservation Strategies and Action Plans

Signatories	National or Regional Conservation strategy for raptors	Raptor Conservation covered in NBSAP or other national strategies	National Species Action Plans	Available in the Raptors MOU webpage
Angola		X		
Armenia				
Belgium				
Burkina Faso				
Burundi				
Chad	Under development			
Congo, The Democratic Republic of the				
Côte d'Ivoire				
Croatia				
Czech Republic	X			
Denmark				
Djibouti				
Egypt				
Equatorial Guinea				
Ethiopia				
EU	X			X
Finland			Golden Eagle White-tailed Eagle	
France			Lesser Kestrel Griffon Vulture Red Kite Egyptian Vulture Osprey Cinereous Vulture Bearded Vulture	X
Gambia				
Germany		X	Peregrine Falcon (regional) White-tailed Eagle (regional)	
Ghana				
Guinea	Under development			
Hungary				
India			Vultures: Oriental White-backed Vulture,	X

			Long-billed Vulture Slender-billed Vulture Himalayan Vulture Eurasian Griffon Red-headed Vulture Egyptian Vulture Bearded Vulture Cinereous Vulture	
Iran, Islamic Republic of				
Israel				
Italy				
Jordan				
Kenya				
Lebanon	Under development			
Libya				
Luxembourg			Red Kite	X
Madagascar			Sooty & Eleonora's falcons	X
Mali	Planning phase			
Mongolia	Planning phase			
Morocco	Planning phase			
Nepal				
Netherlands				
Niger				
Norway	X			X
Pakistan	Under development	X		
Portugal			Necrophagous birds: Egyptian Vulture Griffon Vulture Cinereous Vulture	
Romania				
Saudi Arabia				
Senegal				
Slovakia			Red-footed Falcon	
Somalia				
South Africa			Under development (Vultures)	
Spain				
Sudan				
Sweden			Montagu's Harrier	

Switzerland	X			X
Syrian Arab Republic				
Togo				
Tunisia				
United Arab Emirates	Under development			
United Kingdom			Hen Harrier	
Yemen				
Total	4 completed 8 underway	3	10 Signatories 19 species	7 Signatories 14 documents