



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

Distribution: General  
UNEP/CMS/Raptors/TAG4/Doc.6.2c

16 November 2021

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

### AMENDMENTS TO THE LIST OF SITES IMPORTANT FOR MIGRATORY RAPTORS

*Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU in cooperation with BirdLife International*

#### Background

1. At the third meeting of TAG (TAG3), members were updated on the work undertaken in relation to the List of Sites (Table 3 of Annex 3 to the MOU) to enact the changes to the list requested by the Second Meeting of Signatories (MOS2). These changes were summarised for their consideration and TAG agreed to the procedures to amend the list of sites summarised in TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1 "Amendments to the list of sites important for migratory raptors"<sup>1,2</sup> and TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1/Annex 2<sup>3</sup> and checked and confirmed that the changes outlined had been made appropriately in the site list.

2. It had been anticipated at TAG3 (and in TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1) that further changes to the site list would be required as a result of Switzerland's plans to amend their site list, which would have required TAG's review. However since TAG3, further clarification has been received that Switzerland is not in a position to propose changes to their site list in advance of TAG4 although it would still be their intention to amend their list thereafter. The Coordinating Unit will further explore this outstanding issue with Switzerland with the aim of identifying a way forward to accommodate its plan to review its site list before or after MOS3, while still facilitating consideration and endorsement of draft Table 3 by the Meeting of Signatories.

3. Since TAG3, the review of the action plan has highlighted necessary changes to Annex 2 of the MOU to reflect the latest UN country names in particular that former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is now North Macedonia and Swaziland is now known as Eswatini. These changes to Annex 2 will be proposed for endorsement by MOS3. TAG is asked to endorse the approach of anticipating these changes and making resultant changes in the sites list. There are no sites of international importance currently in the list for Swaziland so this does not require action but if TAG agrees, the site list for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia would be moved in the alphabetical order and re-titled North Macedonia.

4. No other changes to the site list have been made since those endorsed by TAG3.

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/cms\\_raptors-tag3\\_doc4.1b\\_rev1\\_amendments-site-list.pdf](https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/cms_raptors-tag3_doc4.1b_rev1_amendments-site-list.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> There was an error in TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1/Annex 2. On p.2 in both cases Belgium should have been listed instead of Belarus here: '1,307 incidences of 'Category D' populations at SPA's have been proposed for deletion. This affects listings for 39 species and 7 countries: Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland and Croatia. It would result in the removal of 48 whole SPA sites from across countries: Austria, Belarus, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark and Finland.' The error has now been corrected.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/cms\\_raptors-tag3\\_doc4.1b\\_rev1\\_annex2\\_amendments-site-list.pdf](https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/cms_raptors-tag3_doc4.1b_rev1_annex2_amendments-site-list.pdf)

5. The rationale for all changes to the site list since MOS2 needs to be clearly explained to Signatories and revisions to the site list since MOS2 need to be clearly identifiable in the site list. The proposal is that the site list will be circulated to Signatories in both PDF and Excel format with the changes indicated since the version presented to MOS2. The PDF form will closely resemble Annex 2, while the Excel version will make it easier for Signatories to review the sites.

**Action requested**

TAG is requested to endorse (i) changing the name and order of North Macedonia in the sites list to be sent to Signatories for consultation ahead of MOS3, (ii) the sites rationale document to be sent to Signatories (Annex A) and (iii) the sites list (Annex C) to be circulated to Signatories ahead of MOS3 and the approach to identifying in the sites list the changes made since MOS2 using coloured highlights.

## **Annex A: Summary of further amendments requested by MOS2 to the draft Table 3 list of internationally important sites for migratory raptors in Africa and Eurasia**

### **Background**

In the original text of the Raptors MOU, Table 3 of Annex 3<sup>4</sup> (2008) is entitled “Provisional list of Important Bird Areas that are currently known to be important congregatory bird of prey sites in Africa and Eurasia”. The list comprises 135 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) that qualified according to global and regional criteria for globally threatened species (IBA criterion A1) and congregations (IBA criteria A4iv or B1iv) of species listed on Annex 1 of the MOU. This list of 135 IBAs was intended to be an indicative rather than comprehensive site list and is prefaced by the clarification “This indicative list should be treated as a minimum list of internationally important areas”.

At the 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting of Signatories (MOS1) to the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU), Signatories established a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) and a list of priority tasks for it to address in advance of the 2nd Meeting of Signatories (MOS2) was developed. As part of Activity 1: Improvement of Protection, Task 1.1 was “To review the species list and sites list of the MoU, with part d) stating following consultations with the Signatories, make recommendations as to the updating of Table 3 of Annex 3 of the Action Plan listing internationally important sites for raptors”.

In recognition that the existing Table 3, which listed only 135 sites in 36 territories, did not cover all sites of international importance for raptors across the geographic area of the Raptors MOU and that many Signatories had no sites from their country represented on the list, TAG proposed a significantly more comprehensive updated draft Table 3 for consideration of Signatories in advance of MOS2.

### **Consultation with Signatories in advance of and at MOS2**

In advance of MOS2, Signatories were asked to review the revised Table 3 of Annex 3 list of sites identified for their country and to alert the Coordinating Unit to any errors or omissions. The list is ordered alphabetically by region: Africa, Asia, Central Asia, Europe, Middle East and within each region, alphabetically by country. If Signatories wished to propose additional internationally important sites for species listed in Annex 1 of the Raptors MoU, they were invited to complete the Site proposal form for Signatories (UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/15/Rev.1/Annex B) and return it to the Coordinating Unit. Signatories considering proposing sites of national (as opposed to international) importance were asked to do so in their National Raptor Conservation Strategy or contact the Coordinating Unit for advice. In relation to Special Protection Area (SPA) information within EU Member States, the recommendation of the TAG Working Group was that Table 3 should reflect the data in official releases of the whole Natura 2000 dataset.

During the Signatory consultation period comments were received from a number of Signatories and Signatory-suggested amendments were reviewed by TAG and incorporated in Annex C of UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/15/Rev.1<sup>5</sup> or otherwise explained in this document. Some comments were in addition received after the Signatory consultation period had ended and, at MOS2, the EU signalled that they felt the draft site list was in need of correction in places. Following MOS2, the EU provided further detail of the amendments they wished to propose. These amendments concerned the SPA component of the list.

At MOS2 Signatories also requested further review by TAG of the proposed List of Sites, taking into consideration the amendments to Annex 1 (List of African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey) of the

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/basic\\_page\\_documents/raptors-mou\\_annex3\\_action-plan\\_e.pdf](https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/raptors-mou_annex3_action-plan_e.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/mos2\\_proposals\\_sites\\_list\\_rev1\\_e.pdf](https://www.cms.int/raptors/sites/default/files/document/mos2_proposals_sites_list_rev1_e.pdf)

MOU and the list of Range States in Annex 2 (including a map of the geographic area covered by the MOU), adopted at MOS2<sup>6</sup>.

In the resulting TAG workplan set for the period between MOS2 and MOS3 (UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/18), Activity 1.1 was to “Consider amendments adopted by MoS2 to Annex 1 (species) and amend Table 3 (sites) of the Action Plan, and in particular in relation to sites: b) consider further comments from the Signatories, make recommendations as to the updating of Table 3 of the Action Plan”.

### **Amendments made between MOS2 and MOS3 by TAG to draft Table 3 presented at MOS2**

Responding to the instructions of MOS2, the following amendments have been made by TAG to the draft Table 3 shared at MOS2:

#### ***Insertions for species newly listed on Annex 1 at MoS2***

Eighteen species were added to Annex 1 at MOS2 (listed in Annex B to this document) and this meant that these species needed to be added as qualifying populations to some sites of international importance already in the draft Table 3 presented to MOS2. In addition, some new sites were added to draft Table 3 for which one or more of the 18 newly listed Annex 1 species met criteria of international importance. Some of the sites newly qualifying for draft Table 3 meet IBA criteria of international importance and others are SPAs. Insertions to the IBA element of draft Table 3 for qualifying populations of Annex 1 species newly listed on Annex 1 at MOS are marked in yellow. The site name and code are also highlighted in yellow if it is an entirely new IBA. 533 new qualifying population records at IBAs have been added for species newly listed on Annex 1 at MOS2. These involve the following species: Bearded Vulture (95), Cape Vulture (46), Himalayan Griffon<sup>7</sup> (5), Hooded Vulture (1), Indian Vulture (85), Lappet-faced Vulture (18), Red-headed Vulture (14), Rüppell's Vulture (6), Slender-billed Vulture (68), White-backed Vulture (3), White-headed Vulture (1) and White-rumped Vulture (191). These additions occurred in 34 countries (Botswana, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Armenia, France, Georgia, Greece, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates and Yemen) and result in an additional 157 IBAs being added to draft Table 3. No other newly listed Annex 1 species were qualifying species at IBAs.

To amend the SPA component of the list of sites of international importance, for consistency with the rest of the existing list TAG used the same (May 2015) version of the Natura 2000 database used as the basis for creation of the MOS2 version of Table 3. Newer Natura 2000 datasets are now available and at some point MOS may ask TAG to update Table 3 in that regard or agree at what interval such updates should be made.

There are 150 cases where species newly listed on Annex 1 at MoS2 have been added as qualifying populations to SPAs on draft Table 3. These cases involved Bearded Vulture in Austria, Spain, France, Greece and Italy and are highlighted in blue. No new SPAs qualified to be added to the list as a result. No other newly listed Annex 1 species had records in SPAs.

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<sup>7</sup> Himalayan Griffon was prematurely listed as a qualifying species at some sites in the MoS2 version of draft Table 3 presented in UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/15. This anomaly concerned Afghanistan, Nepal, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and a footnote has been added to draft Table 3 to explain this. Since the recognised common name for the species is now ‘Himalayan Griffon’ rather than Himalayan Vulture (del Hoyo & Collar 2014) the common names of all records of this species have been updated in draft Table 3 to read ‘Himalayan Griffon’ for consistency.

### ***Deletions from draft Table 3 presented at MOS2***

As outlined in UNEP/CMS/Raptors/TAG3 doc 4.1b, the specific alteration the EU requested to the SPA component of the draft Table 3 presented at MOS2 was the removal of Category D populations from SPAs on draft Table 3. Categories A-C are different bands used to evaluate the relative size or density of the population of a species listed as occurring at an SPA in relation to the national population. They are used to describe the percentage of the national population present at the SPA, while Category D is used for non-significant populations “where a population of the species concerned is present on the site in question in a non-significant manner”.

Qualifying species with populations listed under category D at SPAs from the draft Table 3 presented at MoS2 have been identified using again the May 2015 Natura 2000 dataset. They are highlighted in red and proposed for removal from draft Table 3. 1,307 incidences of “Category D” populations at SPA’s have been proposed for deletion. This affects listings for 39 species and 7 countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland and Croatia. It results in the removal of 48 whole SPA sites from across countries: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark and Finland.

### ***Amendments as a result of changes to names of countries in Annex 2***

Further to the addition of South Sudan to the draft Table 3 presented to MOS2, there have been two further country name changes since MOS2. The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is now known as North Macedonia and the country name has been amended in the draft Table 3 in anticipation of the corresponding amendment to Annex 2 which will be proposed to MOS3. There are no sites of international importance listed for Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) in draft Table 3, so no name change amendments are necessary in Table 3.

### ***Consultation with Signatories in advance of MOS3***

With a starting point of the draft Table 3 presented to MOS2 (Annex C of UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/15/ Rev.1), the amendments requested by MOS2 and detailed above have been implemented in the amended draft Table 3 now circulated to Signatories for their consideration ahead of MOS3 pursuant to Rule 16 of the Rules of Procedure for meetings of Signatories to the Raptors MOU

### ***Future updates to Annex 3, Table 3***

MOS3 may wish to consider with what frequency Table 3 should be updated and what instruction MOS3 will give to TAG and/or to Signatories in this regard.

**Annex B****Species added to Annex 1 (List of African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey) of the MOU at MOS2**

For further detail see UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/13<sup>8</sup>

***Scientific name (Common name)***

*Gypaetus barbatus* (Bearded Vulture)

*Circaetus beaudouini* (Beaudouin's Snake-eagle)

*Circaetus pectoralis* (Black-chested Snake-eagle)

*Circaetus cinereus* (Brown Snake-eagle)

*Sarcogyps calvus* (Red-headed Vulture)

*Trigonoceps occipitalis* (White-headed Vulture)

*Necrosyrtes monachus* (Hooded Vulture)

*Gyps himalayensis* (Himalayan Griffon)

*Gyps bengalensis* (White-rumped Vulture)

*Gyps africanus* (White-backed Vulture)

*Gyps indicus* (Indian Vulture)

*Gyps tenuirostris* (Slender-billed Vulture)

*Gyps coprotheres* (Cape Vulture)

*Gyps rueppelli* (Rüppell's Vulture)

*Torgos tracheliotos* (Lappet-faced Vulture)

*Hieraaetus ayresii* (Ayres's Hawk-eagle)

*Falco cuvierii* (African Hobby)

*Asio capensis* (Marsh Owl)

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/proposals-amendments-raptors-mou-andor-its-annexes-african-eurasian-migratory-birds-of-prey>