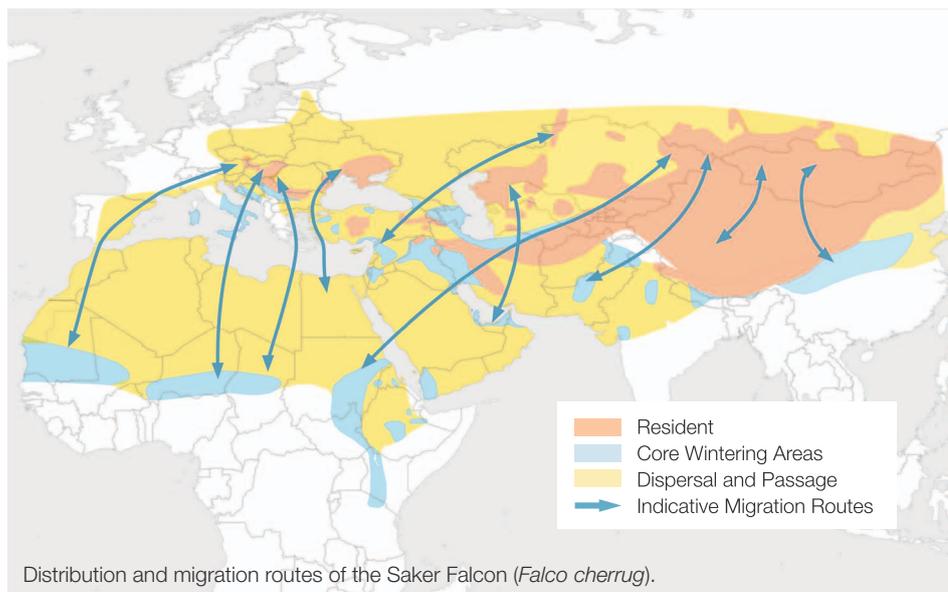


SAKER FALCON GLOBAL ACTION PLAN (SakerGAP)

The Saker Falcon Task Force was established as part of a Concerted Action adopted by the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) in November 2011 (CMS Resolution 10.28). Its mission is to bring together Range States, Partners and interested parties, to develop a coordinated Global Action Plan, including a management and monitoring system, to conserve the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*).

The Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) covers a 10-year period (2015 - 2024). Its overall goal is to reverse over two decades of rapid population declines to re-establish a healthy and self-sustaining wild Saker Falcon population throughout its range, and to ensure that any use of the species in traditional falconry continues in a sustainable manner.



What is a Saker Falcon? The Saker Falcon is a large, powerful falcon, adapted to relatively arid, open landscapes. Its range spans over 80 countries and it feeds on small birds and mammals. Saker Falcons breed in the Palearctic region from Central Europe to East Asia, and migrate south to wintering areas in Africa, Southern and Eastern Asia. Key breeding states in Europe are Hungary and Ukraine; in Asia the main strongholds are China, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and Asiatic Russia. These four Asian States hold over 90% of the global breeding population.

What is special about the Saker Falcon? Birds of prey, and falcons in particular, are symbols of power and freedom. The Saker Falcon has been favoured by falconers for thousands of years, so it has an important traditional, cultural and economic place within many countries, especially in the Gulf States and in Central Asia.

Saker Falcon

Conservation status

- Globally Endangered (IUCN, 2012)
- CMS Appendix I
- CITES Appendix II
- Bern Convention Appendix II
- EU Birds Directive Annex I

Estimated global population size

6,100 - 14,900 pairs
(CMS Raptors MoU, 2013)

Global population trend

Rapid decline, involving almost 50% of the global population in the last 20 years (BirdLife International, 2013)

Main threats

- Electrocution by power lines
- Unsustainable trapping for trade and falconry purposes
- Secondary poisoning and shooting
- Habitat loss and degradation
- Collision with man-made structures
- Extensive knowledge gaps

The key Objectives of the SakerGAP are to:

- Ensure that the impact of electrocution is reduced significantly, enabling a stable or increasing population trend of the Saker Falcon in key breeding range counties of Central Asia and Europe.
- Ensure that trapping and other forms of taking Saker Falcons from the wild are legal, controlled, and sustainable, thereby allowing population stabilisation and growth.
- Ensure that other identified factors causing mortality (e.g. secondary poisoning and collisions with man-made objects and infrastructure) do not have significant impact on sub-populations.
- Maintain, restore and re-establish the historic range of the Saker Falcon by ensuring suitable breeding and foraging habitats, and by re-establishing healthy prey populations.
- Promote effective involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation of SakerGAP, within an Adaptive Management Framework.

What is the future prospect of the Saker Falcon? Population monitoring data suggests that if the cumulative effect of threats is not controlled and reduced, the majority of the sub-populations may significantly decrease or become extinct. The wild Saker Falcon may, as a consequence, be lost for future generations.

Sustainable use: In order to shift away from unregulated and illegal taking, the goal is to allow an appropriate sustainable falcon harvest, whilst simultaneously reducing the cumulative impact of harvesting, and minimizing impacts on declining non-harvestable populations. This can be achieved by the application of a carefully designed and managed quota system; enhanced synergies between international and national legislation and effective enforcement, incorporating a compliance friendly regulatory design, effective controls and sanctions.

Saker Falcon Adaptive Management Framework: This outline framework can be applied throughout the range of the species and includes a description of the six key steps in the cycle: plan, design, act, monitor, evaluate and learn, and adjust management.

What are the next steps? To gain momentum, the Task Force has elaborated four ambitious Flagship Proposals with the following aims:

- Create an Online Information Portal to engage falcon hospitals, falconers and trappers within a Saker Falcon Network.
- Deploy 100 satellite tags to track the movements of selected falcons.
- Erect 1,000 artificial nest platforms to create new breeding opportunities.
- Install or retro-fit 1,000,000 new or existing 'bird-safe' electricity poles.

What can be done to help? Effective implementation of the SakerGAP will be dependent upon the active support and engagement of a wide range of stakeholders, including Government agencies, conservationists, falconers and local communities. All have a role to play in the conservation and management of the species in the breeding areas and all along its flyway. Actions will be needed at all levels: international, national, regional and local.

Expressions of interest are invited to support the development and implementation of the practical conservation activities outlined in the SakerGAP. Adequate funding will be needed to deliver the vision of a healthy and self-sustaining wild Saker Falcon population, also enabling sustainable use for traditional falconry purposes.



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Financial contributions were received from:

- Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates)
- Saudi Wildlife Authority (on behalf of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)
- European Commission (on behalf of the European Union)
- CITES Secretariat
- CMS Parties



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For more information, please contact:

Nick P. Williams
Programme Officer - Birds of Prey
CMS Office - Abu Dhabi
United Nations Environment Programme
c/o Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates

Email: nwilliams@cms.int

www.cms.int/raptors