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United Arab Emirates

The Interim Coordinating Unit for the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU)

Saker Falcon Task Force

**1st Meeting on 29th March 2012
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**



Meeting Report July 2012



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Introduction

The 116 Parties to the Convention on Migratory Species CMS adopted Resolution 10.28 at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) held in Bergen, Norway from 20th – 25th November 2011. The Resolution lists the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) in CMS Appendix I, excluding the population in Mongolia, and provides for the establishment of an immediate Concerted Action supported by all Parties. It also calls for the establishment of a Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) under the auspices of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) of the UNEP/CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU). The Resolution states also that the Parties agree to provide financial and other resources to the operation of the Task Force and to the implementation of the Concerted Action in cooperation with the Signatories of the Raptors MoU, Range States and other interested parties. The Task Force is instructed to meet in the first quarter of 2012 to identify priority actions and to begin implementation of the Resolution immediately.

The UNEP/CMS Office - Abu Dhabi held the inaugural meeting of the Saker Falcon Task Force in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), on 29 March 2012. The meeting had 27 participants including Government officials and representatives from international and non-Governmental organisations. The objective of this 1st meeting of the Task Force was to bring together key stakeholders to review its Terms of Reference and agree on its Work Plan for 2012–2014, including the adoption of an international Single Species Action Plan protocol. Members were requested to take responsibility for leading and driving forward a range of critical tasks to better understand the threats facing the species, and to identify how best to tackle them.

Welcoming remarks

Mr. Nick Williams, Programme Officer and lead of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) for the UNEP/CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) welcomed the participants and gave an introduction on the ICU and the background to CMS Resolution 10.28.

The Raptors MoU is a daughter agreement of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). The ICU of the Raptors MoU is based in Abu Dhabi thanks to the generous support of the Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the UAE.

The need to establish a Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) was identified during CMS COP10 in November 2011. In the previous CMS COP9 in Rome in 2008, there had been a proposal from Croatia to include the Saker Falcon in Appendix 1 of the Convention. The proposal was not accepted at that time but expectations were that the Saker would be listed on Appendix 1 at COP10 unless its population status improved. At COP10, the European Union put forward a proposal to include the Saker Falcon in Appendix 1, highlighting the fact that the conservation status of the species was still problematic. Discussions at COP10 indicated that a number of countries did not support the listing proposal and a Working Group was formed to find a way forward. That Working Group met 7 times during the week of the COP and developed the proposal to include the establishment of the Saker Falcon Task Force within CMS Resolution 10.28 specifically to support the implementation of the Resolution.

In accordance with Resolution 10.28, the mission of the STF 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.

The ICU for the Raptors MoU drafted Terms of Reference for the STF according to the mandate from COP10 and circulated them to Saker Falcon Range States and to other interested Parties in early January 2012, with a request for Expressions of Interest to serve as member on the STF. The ICU received over 50 Expressions of Interest, and completed a selection process with the aim of maximising geographic coverage and ensuring the

widest possible stakeholder representation. Twenty-seven participants were present at the first Meeting of the STF.

Mr. Williams noted that the creation of the Task Force was a real opportunity to assist the conservation of the Saker Falcon and that participants should strive to ensure delivery of the mandate that had been given by the CMS COP. Mr. Williams said he believed that participants shared the same central goal: to re-establish and maintain a flourishing wild population of Saker Falcon. He acknowledged that there was a huge amount of knowledge, experience and expertise around the table and that he was looking forward to a highly positive and productive meeting. In conclusion he noted that “We really need to ‘Seize the Day!’”

Election of Chairman and Vice Chair

Dr. Nicholas Fox, International Wildlife Consultants (IWC), proposed Professor Colin Galbraith (CMS Scientific Council) to be the Chairman. This was seconded by Mr. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia).

Mr. Janusz Sielicki, International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF), proposed Mr. Umeed Khalid (Pakistan) to be Vice Chair, seconded by Mr. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) and Tsogtsaikhan Purev (Mongolia).

The elected Chairman, Prof. Colin Galbraith, stated that this was a unique opportunity to create solutions and seek consensus on the conservation management needs of the Saker falcon. The aim of the STF was to work together, and develop and implement a concerted plan of action. The Chair emphasized that all the meeting participants’ involvement and input would be needed, and reminded the meeting that the STF had to report to the 1st Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MoU in December 2012; the 18th CMS Scientific Council meeting in 2013 and CMS COP11 in 2014. Reporting to these meetings presented a challenging timetable but he was confident of rapid progress given the experience and knowledge of the Task Force’s participants.

The meeting agreed to follow the Agenda presented by the ICU.

Objectives of the 1st Meeting

The objectives of the meeting were to:

- Elect a Chairman and Vice Chair for the STF.
- Review and agree the General Principles of operation for the STF.
- Review and agree the Terms of Reference for the STF.
- Explain the process behind the recent reclassification by IUCN of *Falco cherrug* as 'Endangered'.
- Introduce the protocol for International Single Species Action Planning.
- Review and agree the Work Plan 2012-2014 for the STF, including a timetable for planning and hosting a Stakeholders' Action Planning Workshop.
- Secure volunteers to lead Work Streams to address key Objectives in the Work Plan.
- Agree on estimated financial requirements and outline a funding plan.

The Chairman emphasized that the Work Plan was key to the delivery of the Task Force. He expressed the hope that this meeting would create consensus about the conservation needs of the species and begin to build joint action.

The meeting agreed to the Objectives for the First meeting of the Task Force.

Guiding Principles

The ICU had prepared Guiding Principles for the STF in an effort to create a fresh approach and to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the CMS Parties. The Guiding Principles were intended to promote frank and open debate, generate mutual trust and respect amongst members, and establish a positive and constructive atmosphere in which the required actions can be undertaken with the support of all stakeholders.

The Chairman opened the floor for general comments regarding the Guiding Principles.

It was noted that some members of the Task Force represent particular constituencies, organisations or areas of interest. The Chairman urged all these participants to contribute to the work in the best way possible given their particular remit, either representing particular organisations or in a personal capacity, as appropriate.

The Chairman pointed out that, given the complexity of the tasks to be undertaken, the future *modus operandi* of the STF may include establishing Working Groups and holding telephone conferences as required.

The meeting agreed to the following Guiding Principles for the work of the Task Force:

By adopting Resolution 10.28, the 116 States that are Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wildlife Animals (CMS) decided, as part of an immediate Concerted Action, to establish the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF), under the auspices of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) of the UNEP/CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU). The mission of the Task Force 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).

We, the ICU of the Raptors MoU, are convinced that the establishment of the Saker Falcon Task Force provides a unique opportunity to successfully promote effective conservation of the species, throughout its range. We acknowledge that there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders involved, originating from over 50 Range States, each with a distinct culture and suite of traditions. Moreover, we recognize that success will be achieved by addressing some complex and sensitive issues that have remained unresolved to date.

In an effort to create a fresh approach in order to capitalize on the opportunity presented to us by the CMS Parties, we would like to put forward some Guiding Principles for Members of the STF to consider. These Principles are intended to promote frank and open debate, to generate mutual trust and respect amongst Members and to ultimately establish a positive and constructive atmosphere in which satisfactory resolutions can be achieved by the consensus of all stakeholders.

We firmly believe that we all share a single strategic goal: the long-term conservation of the Saker Falcon. We each hold an important personal responsibility for the ultimate success of the Task Force. Contributions from all stakeholders are important and should be respected and valued. Only by collaborating and working effectively together can we succeed in securing a safe future for the Saker Falcon.

We would like to ask all Members of the STF to agree to uphold the following set of Guiding Principles:

- **Seize the day** – embrace this unique opportunity with a positive and constructive attitude;
- **Be sensitive to the position and perspective of others** – perceiving a situation through other stakeholders' eyes and empathizing with them will help understand their frame of reference;
- **Focus on the facts** – often unnecessary disagreements are generated by a misperception or misunderstanding of the facts involved;
- **Seek shared interests and shared benefits** – work towards identifying and understanding shared goals before attempting to resolve any differences;

- **Maintain an open mind** – listen carefully, consider and reflect on statements made by other stakeholders in order to enhance mutual understanding;
- **Assume the best and act in good faith** – interpret other stakeholder's positions positively and avoid assuming the opposite;
- **Tackle the problem, not the stakeholder** – destructive and personal criticism will most likely have a negative impact on the meeting process and thereby backfire;
- **Seek win-win solutions** – resolutions are unlikely to be implemented or to remain long-standing unless they are mutually acceptable to all those involved.

Terms of Reference

The meeting considered the draft Terms of Reference as presented by the ICU (see Annex 4). The Chairman stressed that they should be read alongside Resolution 10.28 to get the full picture of the work to be accomplished and the ways in which it should be delivered.

The meeting agreed that the overall aim was to bring together Range States, Partners and interested parties to develop a coordinated Global Action Plan and to establish the basis for its implementation.

Membership of the Task Force

The meeting considered the overall membership of the Task Force and possible gaps in its current membership in terms of representation of all stakeholders. The Chair noted that Africa was not represented and stressed the importance of having a representative from this region to complete coverage of the wintering range of the species.

Andrew Dixon (IWC) pointed out that many of the members of the Task Force were not Government representatives and that this could affect the successful implementation of the Work Plan. Gamal Medani (UAE) pointed out that it would be good to add a representative from the Federal Ministry of the United Arab Emirates to the Task Force. Nick Fox (IWC) suggested including a representative of the falcon trappers to the STF, and that veterinary experts would be important stakeholders. Nigel Collar (Birdlife international) emphasized the importance of representation from Russia and China. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) commented that all Range States were important, noting the classification of states across the key annual stages of the Saker Falcon's lifecycle, namely breeding grounds, wintering range and flyway states. Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) raised questions about fundraising, especially how will this be coordinated. Sadegh Zadegan (Islamic Republic of Iran) wondered how communications would be handled. Nick Williams said that the ICU would be sending summarizing messages to keep the wider interested community informed and that CMS would take care of official CMS Notifications. Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) and Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) offered help to contact Governments in the West Asia and Middle East regions respectively to keep them informed of the work of the Task Force.

Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) pointed out that the EU should be represented on the Task Force. Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) stressed the importance of getting the EU's involvement in the work. It was noted that this was particularly important in terms of the implementation of the Work Plan and fundraising. The Chairman agreed, noting that the work of the Task Force will need to be flexible and be delivered within the available resources for the work. Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) asked for a classification of the participants in the first meeting against the composition of the group cited in the Terms of Reference in order to help identify any gaps in representation. This is presented below:

Action Point 1: The ICU is asked to present details of the Task Force membership.

- **Chairman and Vice Chairman** → Colin Galbraith (CMS Scientific Councilor) and Umeed Khalid (Pakistan)

- **STF Secretariat** – to be provided by ICU of the Raptors MoU → Nick Williams and Jenny Renell
- **2 CMS Scientific Councilors** → Fernando Spina
- **3-4 representatives from Central and East Asia** (core breeding areas) → Martiros Nalbandyan (Armenia), Anatoliy Levin (Kazakhstan), Tsogetsai Khan Purev (Mongolia)
- **2 representatives from Europe and Eastern Europe** (breeding areas) → Mátyás Prommer (Hungary), Michal Adamec (Slovakia), Maxim Gavriljuk (Ukraine)
- **2-3 representatives from the Middle East** (migration/wintering areas and falconry) → Adel Mohamed Al Awadhi (Bahrain), Sadegh Sadeghi Zadegan (Iran), Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia), Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia), Abdulnasser Alshamsi (UAE), Gamal Medani (UAE)
- **1-2 representatives from North and East Africa** (wintering areas) → *None*
- **2-3 representatives from NGO partners** → Nigel Collar (BLI), Janusz Sielicki (IAF), Andrew Dixon (IWC), Nick Fox (IWC)
- **1 independent Specialist Technical Advisor** (ornithologist) → András Kovács
- **1 representative from CMS Secretariat** → Borja Heredia
- **1 representative from CITES Secretariat** → Tom De Meulenaer
- **In addition to the draft ToR**, 1 representative from IUCN → Robert Kenward
- **In addition to the draft ToR**, 1 representative from UNEP/ROWA → Diane Klaimi

Action Point 2: The meeting asked the ICU to seek additional government representation from China, Russia, additional Central Asian states, at least 1 African state, trappers' and users' groups, and propose amendments to the ToR accordingly.

Action Point 3: Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) and Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) offered help to contact Governments in the West Asia and Middle East region respectively.

Action Point 4: The ICU is to develop a proposal to consolidate the STF membership, based on a set of priorities which will align the number of the STF members to the ToR.

The meeting agreed that all coordination of communications regarding the STF would be carried out through the ICU of the Raptors MoU in consultation with CMS.

Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) stated that one of UNEP/ROWA's aims was to ensure that Governments were aware of CBD objectives. Government representatives of the STF should communicate with their CBD Focal Points, and make sure that the objectives for conservation and sustainable use of the Saker Falcon can be taken into account within National Biodiversity Species Action Plan (NBSAP) targets. The Chairman stated that this link is important and hopefully this STF will be an exemplary case that can be used by CBD and by others to help deliver conservation actions on the ground. Umeed Khalid (Vice Chair) stated that CITES is of importance to the future work programme and suggested that the Task Force could help CITES and the EU deliver wider conservation benefits. The Chairman confirmed that working alongside CITES was key to success and welcomed its involvement in the Task Force.

Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) noted that the work will take some time to develop and that there may be no quick solutions. He stressed the importance of guidance on how to really work on the ground, opening the way for sustainable use of the Saker Falcon, based on robust science and monitoring. He noted the need for funding for the work of the Task Force and his concern that this may prove difficult to obtain.

Nick Fox (IWC) noted the urgency of the present situation and the need to stay focused on the conservation needs of the Saker Falcon, which were a mixture of different issues in the various parts of the species range. This was complicated e.g. because this species is partly resident and partly migratory.

Nigel Collar (BLI) emphasized how limited the scientific base was and that substantial work was required to obtain an effective level of data and information to provide a sound evidence base so that the species can be effectively managed.

Action Point 5: STF members are to communicate with their country's CBD Focal Points to ensure that Saker Falcon conservation is considered in the development of NBSAPs. This is required immediately as the CBD COP11 will take place from 8-19 October 2012.

The meeting agreed that there is a need to develop awareness and focus on key management and conservation issues. In particular, there is a need to develop communication with Government representatives across the range of the species and with Multilateral Environmental Agreements.

The meeting agreed to the ToR for the Task Force, noting the issues to be resolved regarding membership and noting the reporting timeline outlined above.

IUCN listing

Nigel Collar (BLI) gave a presentation on Saker Falcon IUCN Listing to explain the process behind the recent classification of the species as "Endangered" under the IUCN threat category system. IUCN's Red List categories define degrees of extinction risk. CMS uses IUCN endangered listing, as a general guide, to list species on its Appendices. He noted also a range of threats to the population including illegal trapping and trade, with selective catching of females leaving bachelor populations; lower prey base via agricultural intensification and targeted poisoning; mortality on power lines; disturbance at nests; and hybridization with hybrid releases and escapes. Dealing with these problems was difficult due in part to institutional underdevelopment and governance issues in a number of the range states.

Nick Fox (IWC) stressed the cultural importance of falconry and the use of falcons, saying that there was a risk that the traditional, cultural utilization of the Saker Falcon could disappear. Andrew Dixon (IWC) pointed out that many Central Asian states were institutionally underdeveloped (especially the lack of reliable and effective Government-level overview of conservation and trade in falcons) which was a major challenge in getting formal decisions and actions taken. Robert Kenward (IUCN) stressed that applying the precautionary principle was critical; however, it was important that the Task Force should not spend too much time on such theoretical aspects at this meeting. The recent listing of the Saker falcon as Endangered could be seen as an opportunity, so that the STF's aim could be to achieve a down list in due course.

Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) explained that commercial international trade in CITES Appendix-II listed species such *Falco cherrug* was allowed provided that (a) a national CITES Management Authority had determined that the animals to be exported had been obtained legally; and (b) a Scientific Authority had advised that the trade was sustainable and 'not detrimental to the survival of the species in the wild'. CITES has mechanisms in place to review authorized level of export, and take measures against countries where trade was found to be unsustainable. Such review, conducted in the second half of 2000, concluded that trade in Saker Falcon from nine countries was 'of concern'. Eight had now established zero-export quotas for wild Saker Falcon which can only be lifted when they comply with specific conditions prescribed by CITES, including a series of conservation measures (Iran, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan). The ninth country, Mongolia, implemented all conservation actions required by CITES, and was therefore allowed to export a limited and sustainable number of live Saker falcons under an annual quota system. He pointed out that the listing of species in CITES Appendices I and II strictly adhere to criteria that had been developed and adopted by the CITES Parties. He noted that this was unlike CMS, where IUCN's Red List criteria seemed to act as a proxy for CMS listing criteria. He noted also that CITES listing criteria emphasized the biological and conservation status of a species, similar to IUCN's Red List criteria, but included also its status in international trade (species not in international trade do not qualify for CITES listing). The next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CoP16) was scheduled for March 2013, and any proposals to change the listings of species in the CITES Appendices would have to be submitted by a Party 150 days in advance, by 4 October 2012 at the latest. He also noted that CITES will have a meeting of its Standing Committee in July 2012.

It was noted that Birdlife International was the formal Red List authority for birds for the IUCN. As such, BLI reviewed the threat categories of all 10,000 bird species every 4 years. A review in 2011-2012 of new data on Saker Falcon has resulted in BLI concluding that the species should be considered in the “Endangered” category.

Concerns were raised that this could lead to the listing of the species in CITES Appendix I, leading in turn to a ban on the legal commercial trade of Saker Falcons. Such a move could undermine any mechanisms developed by the STF for controlled sustainable use under an adaptive management framework. As indicated above, it was noted that such a change in the status of the species under CITES would require the submission by a CITES Party of a proposal by 4 October 2012. In discussion, Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) stated that Hungary had no plans to propose listing of the Saker Falcon on Appendix I of CITES. He stated also that, as far as he was aware, the European Union had no plans in this regard at this time. Nigel Collar (BLI) added that Birdlife was similarly not planning to work up a CITES Appendix I listing proposal for the Saker Falcon.

Action Point 6: It was noted that communication with the EU will be important to ensure that the Task Force becomes aware as early as possible of any listing proposal of the Saker Falcon by any of the EU member states. The Chairman and the ICU were asked to coordinate communication with the EU Commission.

Action Point 7: The STF to draft an Information Note on the work of the Group to be submitted to CITES COP16. ICU and Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) to coordinate.

Action Point 8 : Robert Kenward (IUCN) to write to IUCN members and to the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU i.e. FACE, to keep them informed of the work of the Task Force.

Borja Heredia (CMS Secretariat) clarified how any revision of a species’ status would be handled under CMS, especially if the population status of the species improves. He noted also that the key objective of the STF is to establish a conservation management process that would hopefully lead to an improvement in the status of the species. If this was successful then a future CMS COP could consider revising the current listing the species in the CMS Appendices.

International Single Species Action Planning

András Kovács, Specialist Technical Advisor to the ICU, gave a presentation to introduce the process for the development of the Saker Global Action Plan. He presented the structure of the revised African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) Single Species Action Plan as a useful model for the development of a plan for the Saker Falcon. The process starts with the identification of the key problems impacting on the species and clarification of the objectives to be met: how can the present situation be transformed into the desired situation?

The Chairman opened the floor for comments. In discussion, the members of the Task Force noted the need for urgent action and to balance this with taking a considered and holistic view of the issues to be resolved. In practice, the timescales involved related to the need to report to the various meetings of the Raptor MoU, the CMS Scientific Council and the next CMS COP. Notable was also the next CITES COP in Thailand in March 2013.

Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) proposed that it would be useful to review the National Reports that countries produced for several other international treaties and Conventions. She noted that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Reports (at least for Arab countries) contain information on the status of Saker Falcons. In addition, some Ramsar National Reports held information on Saker Falcon. Andrew Dixon (IWC) asked who would be approving or supporting the Species Action Plan to be produced by the Task Force. The Chairman replied that the Task Force reported to CMS and that the Conference of the Parties would be the ultimate body to approve the work developed by the Task Force.

Action Point 9: ICU will seek to ensure that the relevant CBD National Reports and Ramsar Convention National Reports are reviewed as part of the data review process of the Saker Falcon.

Action Point 10: Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) is to report on the work of the Task Force to the CITES Standing Committee in July 2012, and in particular to highlight the collaboration with CMS as part of the Joint Work Programme between the two Conventions.

The meeting agreed that the International Single Species Action Planning protocol should provide an effective framework for the future work of the Task Force.

STF Work Plan 2012-14

András Kovacs (Adviser to the ICU) presented the STF draft Work Plan 2012-2014, which has 12 objectives and 53 actions. The objectives cover the broader themes of policy and legislation, stakeholder analysis, gap analysis, sustainable use, field monitoring and research and awareness-raising. The intention is to incorporate these into one coherent Global Action Plan for the species.

The Chairman opened the floor for comments. Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) recognized that there are knowledge gaps, and proposed a re-ordering of objectives (e.g. Objective 8 should come before Objective 6). It was noted that the numbering of the objectives was not fixed and could be changed to suit the work of the Task Force.

Nick Fox (IWC) noted the importance of collating existing information as a priority in developing the Global Action Plan. He stressed that there was at least twenty years field data available for some parts of the species range, and that this should be used as part of the basis for the Action Plan. Nick Williams stressed that the STF's mission was to develop the Global Action Plan as a matter of priority using existing data where possible and highlighting further data needs as part of the work.

In discussion, the meeting noted the importance of early action and of developing a clear timetable for the work of the Task Force, leading up to the next CMS COP. The need for the Task Force to convene a workshop to develop the detailed content of the Global Action Plan was recognized. It was agreed that it was important to hold this workshop as soon as practicable but that other events and time constraints in the ICU in particular may mean that early 2013 would be the earliest possible time that the workshop could be held.

It was noted that whilst the issues of sustainable use will form a key part of the Global Action Plan, other aspects of the conservation of the species will need to be considered as an integral part of the way forward.

Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia) stressed the urgency of convening the workshop and emphasized that key stakeholders need to be involved. He noted that given the level of detail in the proposed work plan, it was important that the key parties were represented at the workshop. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) agreed with this and asked how priorities for action by the STF would be identified. This was felt to be critical if the priority actions were to be funded.

Robert Kenward (IUCN) stressed the need to build the momentum of the Task Force and that as many range states as possible should be involved.

The Chairman summarized the discussion, noting the overall agreement for the development of the Work Plan; the need to be inclusive in terms of the Range States involvement; the importance of identifying clear priorities for action; and the need to assemble a focused funding package that will allow the work to proceed. He stressed that the following key objectives within the work plan were comprehensive and that the future work of the Task Force would, of necessity, be to identify the detailed priorities for implementation.

Work Plan Objectives

The meeting considered each of the Work Plan Objectives in turn and made the following observations:

Objective 1: “Ensure the effective day to day management, administration and support of the Task Force”

The ICU should ensure that there are leaders in place for each objective. It was noted that the ICU had completed the organization and funding of this meeting very effectively, as directed by the CMS COP.

Objective 2: “Establish the Task Force and formally approve the 1012 -2014 Work Plan”

It was noted that this meeting had effectively created the Task Force and that the work plan was under active development.

Objective 3: “Financial planning and fund raising”

Nick Williams (ICU) drew attention to CMS Resolution 10.28, Paragraph 3, regarding funding (the CMS COP decided “To provide financial and other resources for the operation of the Task Force and for the implementation of the Concerted Action”). Nick Fox (IWC) noted that this should include in-kind and other resource contributions. He suggested that it may be possible to host a future meeting as part of the Fourth International Festival of Falconry, due to be held in Abu Dhabi in December 2013. Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) brought to the attention of the meeting a global discussion on resource mobilization. Funding could be divided into fundraising via private contribution and innovative financial mechanisms (such as done with the UNEP/CMS Dugong MoU). The Chairman pointed out that fundraising will depend on the ICU’s capacity to raise funds.

Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) mentioned the need for funding to come from a variety of sources and indicated that His Highness Prince Bandar bin Saud bin Mohammad Al-Saud, President of the Saudi Wildlife Authority (SWA), would be happy to look into providing a financial contribution to fulfill the role of Saudi Arabia and to ensure the continuation and success of this SFTF, provided others also add to the overall funding package. He suggested that CMS write to HH Prince Bandar Al-Saud requesting such a contribution from Saudi Arabia to the Task Force. In terms of co-funding the operation of the STF, the Chairman stressed the importance of the European Union as both short-term and long-term funding possibilities. He noted also the importance of fundraising gathering momentum so that once a Party makes a contribution, others would follow. It was clear that the Task Force required short-term funding to keep the immediate work moving, and long term, larger scale funding to develop work in the field.

Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) noted that there was a range of relevant funding schemes within the EU (e.g. between EU and China), UK (small grants) and others that may be considered. He offered to explore the options for EU funding.

Sadegh Sadeghi Zadegan (Islamic Republic of Iran) suggested that the Task Force might, in due course, consider the development of a proposal for funding under the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Borja Heredia (CMS) agreed that an application to GEF would be good, but warned that this would be a long process. Once the Action Plan was drafted, the Task Force could include GEF as an option for a long term funding mechanism. For the moment, it was more important to concentrate on obtaining short term funding to ensure that the Task Force was able to continue its work.

In discussion the members considered a range of funding mechanisms and stressed the need both for the immediate funding for the work of the Task Force and for any longer term field work that may be required to assist the conservation of the species.

The ICU agreed to prepare a revised budget estimate, focusing on the short term budgetary needs, to ensure that the work of the Task Force continues. This would be prepared by the end of April. Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) requested clarification about who was going to determine which activities would be identified as a

priority for funding. The Chairman noted that this would be a role for the Task Force itself, guided by the views of the ICU in the first instance.

The participants had an initial discussion about how any funding might be allocated to the core work of the Task Force and to component projects. They considered also how funding might, in future be maintained on a sustainable basis. The meeting noted the wide variety of possible routes to obtain funding, including UNEP and the EU. Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) mentioned the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (ISESCO) which funded workshops and meetings. UNEP/ROWA offered to facilitate contact with ISESCO.

Summarising the discussions, the Chairman noted the priorities for action outlined in CMS Resolution10.28 and in particular the urgent need to develop the Global Action Plan, including a management system for the sustainable taking of Saker falcons from the wild. He noted the need to move quickly to establish the Action Plan, and that the work of the Task Force consisted of both short-term and long-term actions. The priority for now, however, was to obtain funding for the core work leading to the development of the Global Action Plan.

Action Point 11: The meeting noted that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is already leading discussions on the possibility of an International Fund for Houbara bustards and potentially for Falcons. Mohammed Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) will report back to the STF on progress with this initiative.

Action Point 12: Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) along with the Chairman will consider funding options from the EU for the work of the Task Force.

Action Point 13: The ICU is to develop a revised budget for the work of the Task Force and circulate this for consideration by the end of April.

Action Point 14: The ICU and the Chairman are to consider the overall options for funding, including in due course the option of developing a proposal for GEF funding.

Action Point 15: Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) will provide the ICU with links to ISESCO and other possible funding organisations.

Action Point 16: The ICU will arrange a formal letter to be sent to His Highness Prince Bandar bin Saud bin Mohammad Al-Saud, President of the Saudi Wildlife Authority, seeking a contribution to ensure the continuation of the Task Force.

Objective 4: “Review Relevant international policies and legislation”

The meeting noted that this was an important objective and its implementation would allow the Task Force to have a clear overview of the legislative and policy framework at the international, and where possible, national level for the Saker Falcon. It was noted that many of the range States were likely to need assistance in providing this type of information and that active coordination of the work would be required.

Several members of the Task Force offered to assist in this aspect of the work programme and a Working Group was formed to take this forward. Members include Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA), Nigel Collar (BLI), Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) and Robert Kenward (IUCN).

Summarizing the discussion the Chairman noted the need to start work on obtaining the overview and noted the creation of the small Working Group to take these forwards.

Action Point 17: The Objective 4 Working Group -- Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA), Nigel Collar (BLI), Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) and Robert Kenward (IUCN) -- is to review relevant international and where possible national legislation and policies – see objectives 4.1 – 4.4. of the Work Plan.

Action Point 18: The Working Group will advise ICU of lead contributor.

Action Point 19: Robert Kenward (IUCN) will contact national falconry organisations asking them to provide data on the legislative status of Saker in their country.

Objective 5: “Carry out stakeholder analysis and develop stakeholders’ network”

Nick Fox (IWC) noted that many trappers were acting illegally, so interacting with them would be complicated. He noted also that many trapper families rely on trapping falcons for their livelihood. He stressed the value of attempting to open a dialogue with the trapping community as part of the work of the Task Force. In addition, Andrew Dixon noted that there was a problem of limited governance in some parts of the Saker’s range. Gamal Medani (UAE) felt that it would be useful to engage a range of other interested parties and stakeholders in the work of the Task Force, even if they were unable to attend meetings. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) thought it would be best to get stakeholders involved who can contribute – not only through Governments. He offered to make contact with a trapper from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to provide a link to the STF. Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) offered to assist with liaison to Governments in the Region. Gamal Medani (UAE) noted that linking to the wider academic community would be important.

The meeting agreed on the importance of getting representation from falconers, especially from Arab States. Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia) clarified that in terms of falconers there are 3 types of users: People with medium levels of income, not using Saker Falcons; those using Saker Falcons; and the rich user. Mohammed Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) added that it would be important to be clear what was expected from the falconry community overall.

The meeting agreed that an effective dialogue had to be developed with other groups that may have an impact on, or interest in, the Saker Falcon, e.g. electricity utility companies that manage networks of power-lines, and hunting organizations that may hold useful data on the species. Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) noted that perhaps some of these wider issues could be covered by the main Raptor MoU.

Action Point 20: The ICU will consider developing a short questionnaire for focal points to obtain priority information on stakeholder interests – to be circulated to participants in advance of the next STF meeting/workshop.

Action Point 21: Mohammad Sulayem to make contact with trappers from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to get feedback on their views on Saker Falcon conservation and management.

Action Point 22: Janusz Sielicki (IAF) will provide national falconry contacts via CIC to the ICU.

In conclusion, the meeting agreed that all Range States should be asked to report the status of the species in their country to the STF. It was clear that there is a wide range of people, governments and organizations that can influence the status of the species and that the Task Force will have to prioritise which to engage with in the first phase of activity.

Objective 6: “Conduct a knowledge gap analysis”

A range of organizations had already undertaken an analysis of the state of knowledge of the Saker Falcon. It would be important for the Task Force to be able to collate the results of these analyses. A number of participants offered to form a small Working Group to review the present state of knowledge. The members were: Nigel Collar (BLI), Robert Kenward (IUCN), Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia), Mátyás Prommer (Hungary), Andrew Dixon (IWC) and Janusz Sielicki (IAF).

The Chairman noted that it was important to learn from current “best practices”. At his request, Tsogtsaikhan Purev (Mongolia) described the conservation and management practices in Mongolia.

Action Point 23: Tsogtsaikhan Purev (Mongolia) will provide ICU with a short paper on Saker Falcon management practices in Mongolia.

Action Point 24: The STF established an Objective 6 Working Group consisting of Nigel Collar (BLI) (nominated lead), Andrew Dixon (IWC), Mátyás Prommer (Hungary), Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia) and Janusz Sielicki (IAF) and requested it to report to future meetings of the Task Force.

Action Point 25: The Objective 6 Working Group will identify key gaps in information which can hinder the implementation of the Work Plan and take appropriate steps with stakeholders to fill them.

Objective 7: “Examine the issue of sustainable use”

The meeting considered how to develop a system to facilitate sustainable use that would be relatively simple to manage and that conforms to the needs of CMS. It would be important in developing this system to ensure that it was aligned with activity under CITES and learned from the CITES experiences. It was noted that CITES had a set of indicators and rules for using wildlife as part of international trade. CITES imposed certain conditions that were externally monitored. E.g., countries were required to have effective legislation in place, information concerning the particular populations to be harvested, and an effective system to limit or control trade. The Chairman requested CITES to circulate a summary to the Task Force of these components.

It was agreed to establish a Working Group to help develop the *modus operandi* for a management system.

It was noted that the management system would need to include issues relating to breeding areas, migration routes and wintering areas. Given this regional spread, it seemed that some degree of adapting to local circumstances would be required and that a “one size fits all” system would be unlikely to be effective.

The Chairman noted that one characteristic of the plan should be to define the geographic area under consideration and to be specific about the management to be put in place there. Nick Fox (IWC) felt that harvesting falcons for domestic trade vs. for export would need to be looked at, as would the release by falconers of falcons originating from unknown wild sources or that are hybrids. The Vice Chair noted that there had been no legal harvesting of Sakers in Pakistan since 2005 and that controls at international airports existed. Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) stated that the Scientific Council was ready to do as much as possible to help develop the system; leading hopefully to the adoption of best practice in the sustainable harvesting of Saker Falcons.

András Kovács (Adviser) gave a presentation on sustainable use. He stressed the importance of the underlying socio-economic and cultural needs associated with the use of the Saker Falcon. Sadegh Zadehan (Islamic Republic of Iran) noted that sustainable use could mean different things in different countries and Robert Kenward (IUCN) added that sustainable use did not have to be consumptive. András Kovacs (Adviser) mentioned that for a number of species, management plans that effectively combine conservation action and sustainable use existed. Michal Adamec (Slovakia) noted that Slovakia were developing procedures on how to sustainably use another raptor species, and that some guidelines from EU were already in place.

The Chairman summarized the discussions on this issue and reminded the meeting of the importance of fulfilling the requirements of CMS Resolution 10.28 in regard to the development of a management system for the Saker Falcon.

It was agreed to form a Working group to take the work in this area forward. The agreed actions in relation to this objective are itemized below as Actions 26 – 30 inclusive.

Action Point 26: Colin Galbraith, Borja Heredia and the ICU are to draft a paper outlining a simple mechanism to manage the population.

Action Point 27: The STF established an Objective 7 Working Group consisting of Colin Galbraith (and ICU/CMS) (nominated lead), Robert Kenward (IUCN), Borja Heredia (CMS), Tom De Meulenaer (CITES), Janusz Sielicki (IAF), Mátyás Prommer (Hungary), Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia), Umeed Khalid (Pakistan), Sadegh Zadegan (Islamic Republic of Iran), Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) and Michal Adamec (Slovakia). The Group was asked to report to future meetings of the Task Force.

Action Point 28: the Objective 7 Working Group is to develop an effective management system to help fulfill the terms of CMS Resolution 10.28.

Action Point 29: Fernando Spina (CMS Scientific Council) will provide the ICU with a link to EU guidelines on sustainable take of raptors.

Action Point 30: Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) will provide information on CITES risk assessment processes.

Objective 8: “Plan and implement fieldwork”

It was noted that one key role for the STF would be to develop best practice for fieldwork in breeding, wintering, and migratory areas. It was particularly important to know what is happening to populations in these areas. Janusz Sielicki (IAF) noted that taking a holistic view of population assessment was important. Maxim Gavrilyuk (Ukraine) stressed the importance of this aspect and noted that ornithologists in different countries will perhaps have data on different aspects of ecology; hence collating such information will be important. He noted that Ukraine had a large breeding population but that resources to undertake fieldwork were limited.

The Chairman summarized the discussions, emphasizing the importance of collating existing information and identifying key gaps in the fieldwork. He echoed the need to develop a clear understanding of population trends for the species. It was agreed to form a Working Group to take this aspect of the work forward with the membership as listed in Action Point 31 below.

Action Point 31: STF established an Objective 8 Working Group consisting of Nigel Collar (Birdlife international), Janusz Sielicki (IAF), Andrew Dixon (IWC), Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia), Fernando Spina CMS Scientific Council), Maksym Gavryliuk (Ukraine), Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) and Martiros Nalbandyan (Armenia), and asked the Group to report to future meetings.

Action Point 32: The Objective 8 Working Group was requested to assess present field activities and develop suggestions for the improvement and expansion of the current Saker Falcon field monitoring and research efforts in key Range States – see Objectives 8.1. – 8.4. on the Work Plan.

Action Point 33: The Working Group should advise ICU of their lead contributor.

Objective 9: “Develop a Saker Falcon Global Action Plan”

The meeting agreed that this was in fact the overarching output from the Task Force. The completion and delivery of the Global Action Plan, encompassing the management of the Saker Falcon would be the key product required to fulfill the terms of CMS Resolution 10.28. It was agreed also that the other Objectives in the proposed Work Plan essentially feed in as component parts to the development of the Global Action Plan.

The meeting agreed that ICU should take the lead on the production of the Global Action Plan.

Action Point 34: ICU to oversee the development of the Global Action Plan, including the possible convening of a Workshop to help identify the priorities for action.

Objective 10: “Advocate, educate and raise awareness”

The meeting noted that there was a wide range of stakeholder groups who needed to be engaged as part of the implementation of the Work Plan. It was agreed that the wider dissemination of the work of the Task Force was an important aspect that would need to be incorporated into the future Work Plan. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) offered to work with the ICU to help ensure the effective wider dissemination of the work of the Task Force. Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia) noted potential opportunities during the Falconry Festival in 2013 to promote the Task Force, and to involve falconers in the work of the Task Force.

Borja Heredia (CMS) suggested that it would probably be necessary to have a new CMS Resolution to adopt the Action Plan and define future action. The work of the Task Force therefore needed to anticipate this future step.

Action Point 35: Nick Fox (IWC) will formally invite the STF to host a session at the Falconry Conference scheduled for 2013, which will form a part of the Fourth International Festival of Falconry.

Action Point 36: The ICU will explore the possibility of education and awareness-raising initiatives aimed at participants and visitors to the Fourth International Festival of Falconry.

Objective 11: “Monitor, evaluate and report on progress”

It was agreed that effective reporting on the work of the Task Force was important. In discussion it was stressed that PR and “marketing” aimed to develop wider awareness of the work of the Task Force was equally useful and should be considered as part of the future Work Plan.

Objective 12: “Plan future STF Work”

The meeting noted the importance of effective planning and delivery within the available budget.

Action Point 37: It was agreed that the ICU should lead on the delivery of Objective 11 and 12, in partnership with STF members and partners and report back to future meetings of the Task Force.

Summarising the overall discussion on the Work Plan, the Chairman noted the overall satisfaction with the planned work and with the creation of the various working groups designed to ensure delivery. He encouraged all the Task Force members to take an active role in these groups.

Fundraising

Nick Williams (ICU) introduced this item to the meeting. He noted that there were many actions that had to be funded for the Task Force to be effective. Firstly the core work of the Task Force had to be resourced to ensure effective overall delivery. This had to be complemented by funding for the Global Action Plan workshop. He noted that the STF itself should be small and focused. The Global Action Plan workshop would offer an opportunity to involve key players not part of the Task Force per se. He indicated that about 150,000 US Dollars was required to develop the Action Planning process and run the Task Force for its first key year of operation. The Chairman requested that the ICU develop a revised budget for circulation to the Task Force by the end of April (see earlier action).

Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) asked what the most urgent funding need was in practice and considered that the preparatory work leading to the Action Planning workshop should be considered further. He indicated again that the Saudi Wildlife Authority would look into making a contribution towards the continuation and success of the Saker Falcon Task Force. He stated that he would like to see others adding to this possible contribution. The Chairman, on behalf of the Task Force, thanked him for this valuable support and stressed the need for others to contribute also. The Chairman would welcome contributions and indicated that he would like to discuss funding with the EU, in particular, as sponsors of the Resolution that

established the Task Force at the CMS COP in Bergen. Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) noted that the Qatar Foundation would be worth approaching in terms of possible funding. Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) offered to help facilitate contact with the Foundation. Michal Adamec (Slovakia) suggested that perhaps a number of EU countries could review their available funds (e.g. the European Rural Development Fund or Natura). CMS Parties could apply for CMS Small Grants for Saker projects. The ICU noted that they could facilitate letters of support in case of need.

The meeting welcomed the potential financial contribution from the Saudi Wildlife Authority.

The meeting identified the following potential funding sources: CMS Small Grants, EU Rural Development Fund, Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund, Natura (EU), Qatar Foundation, Global Environment Facility (GEF), and also potentially Governments in the Saker range.

Action Point 38: The ICU to follow up with Nick Fox (IWC) regarding possibility of holding an STF meeting back-to-back with the International Festival of Falconry, and his generous offer of funding joint participants' attendance.

Action Point 39: Mohamed Sulayem to facilitate contact with Qatar Foundation and provide feedback to ICU.

Action Point 40: The ICU will develop a short note on the work of the Task Force and funding requirements for Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) so that she can approach regional funding bodies.

Action Point 41: The ICU should develop a more detailed financial plan by the end of April 2012, including details of short and medium term requirements.

Action Point 42: Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) will facilitate contact to ISESCO.

Action Point 43: Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) will provide more details on funding opportunities from the EU.

Summary

The meeting considered the timeline for the work of the Task Force.

The timeline listing major events leading up to the next CMS COP is presented below.

Action Point No	Major events	Timeline
All Action Points	Early action by the various Working Groups established here and by members to implement the Work Plan	Immediate
#13, #41	Detailed financial plan	End of April 2012
#46	Possible teleconference to check on progress	End of June 2012
#10	CITES Standing Committee meeting - Report on the work of the Task Force	July 2012
#6	A potential change in the CITES Appendix-II listing of <i>Falco cherrug</i> would need to be proposed by a CITES Party before 4 October 2012 - ensure that the Task Force becomes aware as early as possible of such proposal by any of the CITES Parties, particularly EU member states.	October 2012
#5	CBD COP11 (8-19 October 2012) - STF members to communicate with their country's CBD Focal Points to ensure that Saker Falcon conservation is considered in the development of NBSAPs	Comments for inclusion in NBSAPs needed prior to 8 October 2012.
#37	STF's progress report to the 1 st Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MoU	December 2012
#34	Workshop to develop the Global Action Plan (subject to funding being available)	1st quarter of 2013
#6	CITES COP 16 with the Task Force update being available or delegates	3-15 March 2013
#37	STF's progress report to 18 th CMS Scientific Council meeting	November (TBC) 2013
#35, #36, #38	Falconry Conference in Abu Dhabi within the Fourth International Festival of Falconry	December 2013
#37	STF's progress report to CMS COP11	2014

The meeting noted that CMS and CITES had developed a joint work plan and that the forthcoming CITES COP provided an opportunity to review progress and modify this if required. The Chairman suggested that Borja Heredia (CMS) and Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) consider how this might be achieved to the benefit of the work of the Task Force.

Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) noted the importance of the date for the proposed workshop, with anything after 22 August being suitable (after Ramadan) and asked that the Task Force consider the possibility of having the workshop in one of the breeding countries in Central Asia. Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) noted that Hungary may be willing to host a meeting. It was stressed, however, that the ICU did not have the capacity to host another large workshop in just 5 months' time, which would be very close to the First Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MoU.

The meeting considered what the alternatives to a workshop were if funds cannot be obtained.

The Chairman reiterated the importance of looking at alternative ways to deliver the work and how to work more efficiently. It was clear that the Task Force need to adapt its ways of working to the amount of funds available. For example an expert could visit a range of countries to collect data.

Action Point 44: The ICU will outline a “Plan B” should funding for the Global Action Plan Workshop not materialize.

Action Point 45: Nick Fox (IWC) will share a list of IWC projects with the ICU.

Action Point 46: The ICU will host an STF teleconference towards the end of June 2012 to report on general progress and, subject to funding, decide the date on which the Global Action Plan Workshop would take place.

In closing the meeting, the Chairman summarized the outcomes. The meeting had brought the Task Force to life; reviewed the terms of reference to implement CMS Resolution 10.28; considered the key issues and completed a first review of the proposed Work Plan; identified a timetable for the work; and received a potential offer of support from the Saudi Wildlife Authority.

He thanked the Environment Agency, Abu Dhabi for their support to CMS in general, and specifically for their work related to the raptor MoU and the Saker Falcon in particular. He congratulated the staff of the ICU for the impeccable organization of the meeting and thanked the Vice Chairman, Umeed Khalid (Pakistan), for his support. He thanked all the members of the Task Force for their active and stimulating input to the discussion over the course of the day.

The meeting closed at 17.30.

Annex 1: Action Points from the Meeting

Action Point 1: The ICU is asked to present details of the Task Force membership.

Action Point 2: The meeting asked the ICU to seek additional government representation from China, Russia, additional Central Asian states, at least 1 African state, trappers' and users' groups, and propose amendments to the ToR accordingly.

Action Point 3: Diane Klaimi (UNEP/ROWA) and Mohammad Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) offered help to contact Governments in the West Asia and Middle East region respectively.

Action Point 4: The ICU is to develop a proposal to consolidate the STF membership, based on a set of priorities which will align the number of the STF members to the ToR.

Action Point 5: STF members are to communicate with their country's CBD Focal Points to ensure that Saker Falcon conservation is considered in the development of NBSAPs. This is required immediately as the CBD COP11 will take place from 8-19 October 2012.

Action Point 6: It was noted that communication with the EU will be important to ensure that the Task Force becomes aware as early as possible of any listing proposal of the Saker Falcon by any of the EU member states. The Chairman and the ICU were asked to coordinate communication with the EU Commission.

Action Point 7: The STF to draft an Information Note on the work of the Group to be submitted to CITES COP16. ICU and Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) to coordinate.

Action Point 8 : Robert Kenward (IUCN) to write to IUCN members and to the Federation of Associations for Hunting and Conservation of the EU i.e. FACE, to keep them informed of the work of the Task Force.

Action Point 9: ICU will seek to ensure that the relevant CBD National Reports and Ramsar Convention National Reports are reviewed as part of the data review process of the Saker Falcon.

Action Point 10: Tom De Meulenaer (CITES) is to report on the work of the Task Force to the CITES Standing Committee in July 2012, and in particular to highlight the collaboration with CMS as part of the Joint Work Programme between the two Conventions.

Action Point 11: The meeting noted that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is already leading discussions on the possibility of an International Fund for Houbara bustards and potentially for Falcons. Mohammed Sulayem (Saudi Arabia) will report back to the STF on progress with this initiative.

Action Point 12: Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) along with the Chairman will consider funding options from the EU for the work of the Task Force.

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Annex 2: STF Meeting Agenda

Time	Agenda Item	Lead
8:30-10:30	Welcoming Remarks	Nick P. Williams (ICU)
	Introductions	STF Members
	Election of Chairman and Vice Chair	Nick P. Williams (ICU)
	Objectives of 1 st Meeting	Chairman
	Guiding Principles	Chairman
	Terms of Reference	Chairman
	IUCN Listing	Nigel Collar (BirdLife)
10:30-11:00 Coffee/Tea Break		
11:00-13:00	International Single Species Action Planning	András Kovacs (STA for ICU)
	STF WorkPlan 2012-14	Chairman
13:00-14:15 Lunch		
14:15-16:00	STF WorkPlan 2012-14 (continued)	Chairman
	Roles of STF Members	STF Members
16:00-16:30 Tea/Coffee Break		
16:30-18:00	Fundraising	STF Members
	Next Steps (including timetable)	Chairman
	Any other business	STF Members
	Close of meeting	Chairman

Annex 3: List of Participants

COUNTRIES

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Annex 4: Terms of Reference for the STF

Objective

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*).

Background

The 116 Parties to CMS adopted Resolution 10.28 at the 10th Conference of Parties (COP10) held in Bergen, Norway on 25 November 2011. The Resolution acknowledges the listing of the Saker Falcon on CMS Appendix I, excluding the population in Mongolia, and decides to establish an immediate Concerted Action supported by all parties. It also calls for the establishment of a Saker Falcon Task Force (STF) under the auspices of the Interim Coordinating Unit (ICU) of the UNEP/CMS MoU on the conservation of migratory birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU). The Resolution confirms agreement for financial and other resources to be sought for its operation, and instructs the Task Force to meet in the first Quarter of 2012 to identify priority actions and to begin implementation immediately.

Membership

The aim is for a relatively small (15 - 20 person) but highly effective Task Force. Membership should be focused on scientific representation, based on nominations from the Range States, Signatories and Partners. Members will be required to take responsibility for leading and driving forward discrete tasks or WorkStreams, as identified by the STF. The approach adopted may vary between Workstreams but could include teleconferences, e-mail circulations, on-line fora, meetings, workshops, etc. The proposed composition for the 1st meeting is set out below - this may be modified by the STF, as required:

Chairman and Vice Chairman – to be elected at the 1st Meeting
STF Secretariat – to be provided by ICU of the Raptors MoU
2 CMS Scientific Councillors – including the Chairman of the Scientific Council
3-4 representatives from Central and East Asia (core breeding areas)
2 representatives from Europe and Eastern Europe (breeding areas)
2-3 representatives from the Middle East (migration/wintering areas and falconry)
1-2 representatives from North and East Africa (wintering areas)
2-3 representatives from NGO partners
1 independent Specialist Technical Advisor (ornithologist)
1 representative from CMS Secretariat
1 representative from CITES Secretariat

Roles and Responsibilities

- Chairman/ Vice Chairman
 - Suggest meeting dates and provide deadlines for actions by the STF Members and contributors;
 - Develop Agenda, in consultation with the ICU;
 - Conduct meetings and facilitate events, in collaboration with the ICU;
 - Provide guidance and follow up on Action Points, through the ICU;
 - Review key papers and scientific assessments (e.g. population status, threats, etc.), as necessary.
- ICU – Secretariat to the STF
 - Acting Chairman/Vice Chairman until the 1st Meeting (when these roles will be filled);
 - Elaborate an initial draft WorkPlan of Priority Actions for the STF, in collaboration with the Chairman/Vice Chairman;
 - Prepare and facilitate logistics and other support to aid implementation of the WorkPlan by Members of the STF;
 - Coordinate with Range States, Partners and other parties, in close collaboration with the Chairman/Vice Chairman;
 - Gather and disseminate information on relevant issues, as required;
 - Develop, implement and follow up on Small Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) with relevant bodies, Governments, other parties and consultants, as appropriate;
 - Liaise with the CMS Scientific Council and CMS Secretariat on the Concerted Action and support the technical assessment and monitoring mechanisms;

- Oversee the compilation and submission of Reports to the 1st Meeting of Signatories of the Raptors MoU, the 18th Meeting of the CMS Scientific Council, CMS COP11 and other bodies, as required (to be presented by the Chairman);
- Support the STF to ensure that the Global Action Plan is completed and finalized in a timely manner.
- Members of the STF
 - Lead in taking forward key tasks or WorkStreams, as directed by the STF;
 - Participate actively in meetings, events and in correspondence issued by the ICU on behalf of the STF;
 - Provide relevant information to the STF in a timely manner, including via the ICU;
 - Suggest sound ideas and review the feasibility of conservation and management measures that might be proposed on a case-by-case basis;
 - Coordinate regionally and internally with their other Government colleagues, as appropriate;
 - Coordinate with the Focal Points of other MEAs at a national and regional level, as required;
 - Pro-actively participate actively in fundraising activities;
 - Encourage and facilitate local, national and regional actions to support the STF (e.g. surveys, management, monitoring, etc.);
 - Act as 'champions' to promote the conservation of the Saker Falcon.

Approach

- The ICU will invite Expressions of Interest for representation on the STF, amongst all Range States of the Saker Falcon, Partners and other parties;
- A formal CMS Notification will be issued by the CMS Secretariat updating all Parties to the progress made following the adoption of Resolution 10.28 at COP10;
- The 1st Meeting is to be held in the United Arab Emirates (the host country for the ICU of the Raptors MoU) in the first Quarter of 2012. Venues for any future meetings will be decided by the STF;
- The ICU will select participants for the 1st meeting of the STF based on the information provided in the Expressions of Interest submitted within the deadline, with particular weight being given to candidates' knowledge and experience of bird conservation matters and their potential ability to add value to the mission of the STF;
- The STF will decide on the number, format and frequency of future meetings;
- Papers for the 1st meeting of the STF will be produced in English only. At that meeting, the STF will decide upon the future working language(s) for the initiative;
- It is proposed that the STF adopts the tried and tested International Single Species Action Planning protocols developed by CMS African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), which would include an initial Workshop to which all key Saker Falcon Range States will be invited.

Funding

- CMS COP10 committed 10,000 Euros (available now).
- The Raptors MoU has limited resources to support attendance by representatives from developing countries (as defined by UN criteria) at the 1st meeting of the STF, and will provide the SFT Secretariat, including funding an independent consultant to act as the Specialist Technical Advisor.
- CMS Resolution 10.28 includes a clear expectation that Range States, Partners and other parties will generate funds.
- Chairman/Vice Chairman, with support from the ICU, may make direct approaches by letter to Governments of key Range States or other potential sponsors.

Reporting

CMS Resolution 10.28 establishes a clear timeline of reporting requirements, as follows:

- Report to the 1st Meeting of the Signatories of the UNEP/CMS Raptors MoU, envisaged for the last quarter of 2012.
- Report to the inter-sessional 18th CMS Scientific Council Meeting.
- Report to CMS COP11, and consideration given to downlisting the Saker Falcon at that time.

Annex 5: Revised Work Plan

[see separate document]

Annex 6: UNEP/CMS Resolution 10.28

[see separate document]