



**Vulture Multi-species Action Plan
European Regional Workshop**

CMS Vulture MsAP

International collaboration to conserve African-Eurasian Vultures



Nick P. Williams

Head of the Coordinating Unit of the CMS Raptors MoU

October 2016 – European Regional Workshop, Monfragüe, Extremadura, Spain

Vulture Multi-species Action Plan

Outline of Presentation

- **Overview of CMS**
- **What is the Raptors MoU?**
- **Vulture MsAP**
 - Why vultures?
 - Background and scope
 - Aim and Objectives
 - Framework
 - Challenges
 - Progress to date
 - Next steps



Overview of CMS



Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals



- Multi-lateral Environmental Agreement
- Entered into force 1983
- 124 Parties (October 2016)
- Framework Convention
- 7 Agreements (legally binding)
- 19 Memoranda of Understanding
- 8 Action Plans
- Secretariat in Bonn, Germany

Overall aim is to conserve terrestrial, marine and avian migratory species throughout their ranges

What is the Raptors MoU?



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

Copyright © Mike Barth



- Entered into effect 1 Nov 2008
- Coordinating Unit (UAE)
- Coverage - 131 Range States
- 93 species (Categories I, II and III)
- List of critical sites
- Action Plan – timescale

Overall aim is to conserve migratory raptors and their flyways
in Africa and Eurasia

Raptors MoU – key achievements



- Attracted **56 Signatories** (55 countries and EU)
- Held two **Meetings of Signatories** (2012 and 2015)
- Established **Technical Advisory Group (TAG)**
- Issued **Guidance on National/Regional Strategies**
- **Supported CMS initiatives** to tackle key threats, e.g. poisoning, electrocution, illegal killing, etc.
- **Saker Falcon Task Force** – developed SakerGaP
- Co-sponsored **Egyptian Vulture Flyway Action Plan**
- **Sooty Falcon ISSAP** – underway (in draft)
- **Vulture MsAP** – in progress

Why vultures?



- Vultures **under extreme pressure** from a range of human activities
- One of the **most threatened groups** of birds on earth
- **Drastic and widespread vulture population declines** in recent decades
 - catastrophe in Asia in 1990s and African Vulture Crisis now
- IUCN Red List categorizes many species as **‘Critically Endangered’**
- **Multiple threats:** poisoning (direct and indirect), electrocution on power poles, habitat loss, decreasing food availability, fragmentation of remaining populations, illegal killing and taking, human disturbance, collisions with wind turbines and overhead lines, etc.
- Vultures provide **critically important ecosystem services** by cleaning up carcasses and other organic waste in the environment, thus reducing the spread of dangerous diseases such as anthrax and rabies – resulting in **highly significant economic and human health benefits.**

We really can't afford to lose them!

Vulture MsAP - background



- Mandate established by **CMS Resolution 11.14 - ‘Programme of Work on Migratory Birds and Flyways’** adopted at the 11th Conference of the Parties (COP11) to CMS (November 2014)
- Action 9 of CMS Resolution 11.14, under the Species-specific Conservation Actions section, seeks to:

*‘[...] promote the development, adoption and implementation of species action plans for priority species in line with CMS priorities for concerted and cooperative action, including: [...] d) all African-Eurasian Vultures (except Palm-nut Vulture (*Gypohierax angolensis*)) via the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in African and Eurasia (Raptors MoU)’.*

Vulture MsAP – species covered



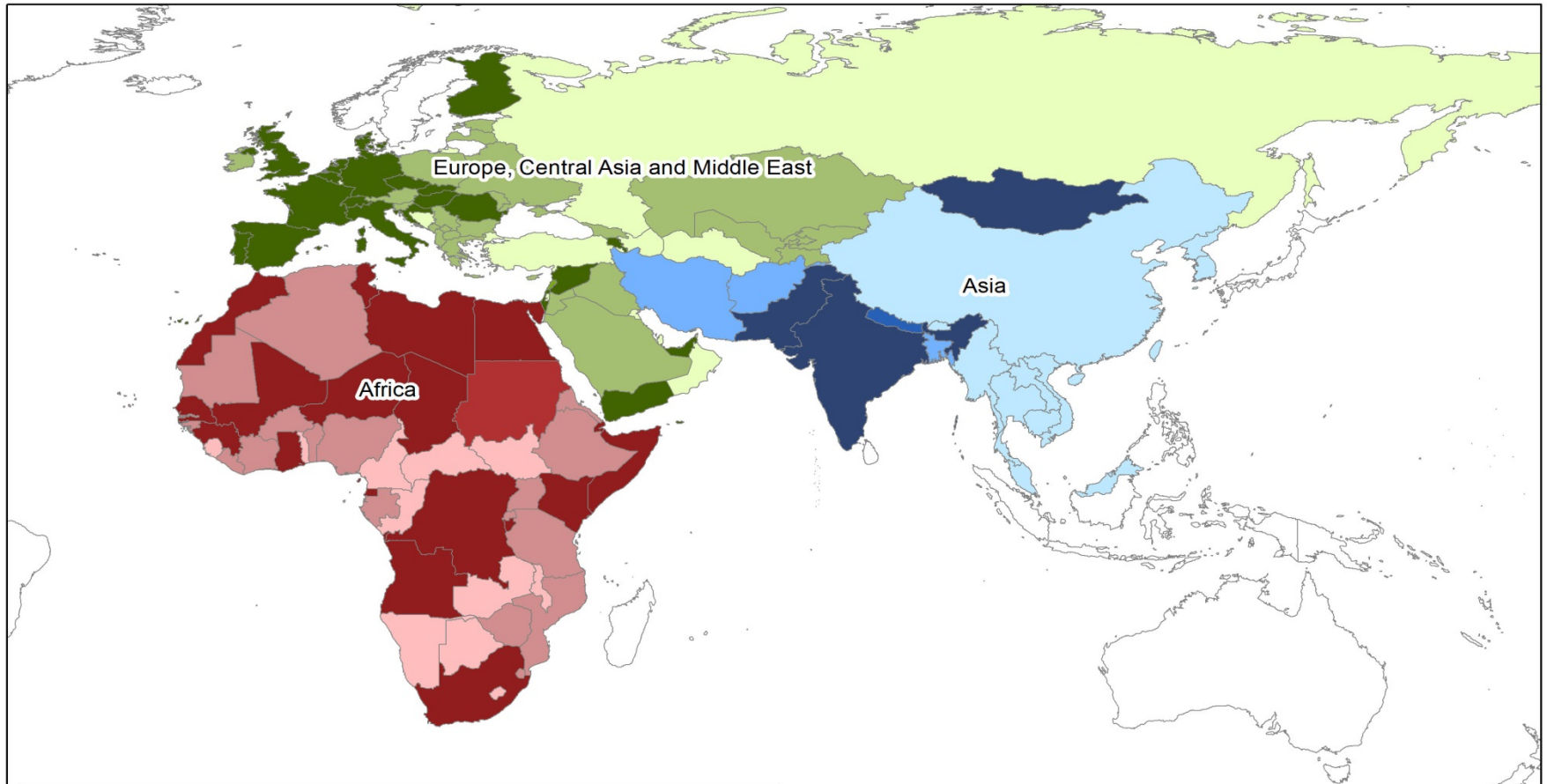
15 (of 16) species classified as Old World vultures

<p>Bearded Vulture (<i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>) Near Threatened</p>	<p>Himalayan Griffon (<i>Gyps himalayensis</i>) Near Threatened</p>	<p>Cape Vulture (<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>) Endangered</p>
<p>Egyptian Vulture (<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>) Endangered</p>	<p>White-rumped Vulture (<i>Gyps bengalensis</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Rüppell's Vulture (<i>Gyps rueppelli</i>) Critically Endangered</p>
<p>Red-headed Vulture (<i>Sarcogyps calvus</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>White-backed Vulture (<i>Gyps africanus</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Cinereous Vulture (<i>Aegypius monachus</i>) Near Threatened</p>
<p>White-headed Vulture (<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Indian Vulture (<i>Gyps indicus</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Lappet-faced Vulture (<i>Torgos tracheliotos</i>) Endangered</p>
<p>Hooded Vulture (<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Slender-billed Vulture (<i>Gyps tenuirostris</i>) Critically Endangered</p>	<p>Griffon Vulture (<i>Gyps fulvus</i>) Least Concern</p>

Vulture MsAP – Geographic scope



Vulture MsAP Range States and Regions



Legend

Shading as follows: country that is both Party to CMS and Signatory to Raptors MOU (darkest) > country that is only Signatory to Raptors MOU > country that is only Party to CMS > country that is not Party nor Signatory (lightest)



Vulture MsAP – Aim and Objectives

The overall aim: to develop a comprehensive strategic Action Plan covering the whole geographic ranges of 15 species of Old World vultures to promote concerted, collaborative and coordinated international conservation actions

Objective 1: To rapidly halt current population declines in all species covered by the Vulture MsAP

Objective 2: To reverse recent population trends to bring the conservation status of each species back to a favourable level

Objective 3: To provide conservation management guidelines applicable to all Range States covered by the Vulture MsAP

Organizational and operational framework



Key challenges

- Massive **geographic scope** - 124 Range States
- Need for governmental and broad **political support** throughout
- Importance of securing engagement from a wide and representative spectrum of **stakeholders**
- Significant **knowledge gaps** in terms of populations status and specific threats, particularly regarding species in Africa
- Requirement to attract **significant financial resources** and in-kind contributions to develop and, ultimately, to implement, the MsAP
- **Timeline very tight** – aiming to finalise Vulture MsAP for presentation at CMS COP12, scheduled to be held in October 2017

Vulture MsAP - progress to date



- **November 2014** – Mandate established at CMS COP11
- **October 2015** – Endorsed at MoS2 of Raptors MoU
- **January 2016** – Interim Steering Group established
- **February 2016** – Project Charter published
- **February 2016** – Call to Range States & stakeholders
- **March 2016** – Vulture Working Group established
- **April 2016** – Critical funding from Switzerland
- **July 2016** – Three Regional Coordinators established covering Africa, Asia and Europe
- **August & September 2016** – Questionnaires circulated
- **September 2016** – Steering Group established
- **October 2016** – 1st Telecom of the Steering Group

Vulture MsAP – next steps



October / November 2016 - Regional Workshops in Africa, Europe and Asia

Early January 2017 - 1st Draft Vulture MsAP, incorporating regional components

Before mid-February 2017 - Overarching Workshop (date and venue TBC)

By mid-March 2017 – consolidated 2nd Draft Vulture MsAP

March / April 2017 - Month-long public consultation exercise

April / May 2017 - Comments incorporated into Final Draft Vulture MsAP

25 May 2017 - Submit MsAP to CMS Secretariat (COP12 document deadline)

June 2017 - Review by CMS Scientific Council at Sessional Committee meeting

August 2017 – Publication of MsAP with draft Resolution on CMS COP12 website

October 2017 - Considered by CMS Parties at COP12 in Manila, Philippines

Thank you for your attention!



Vulture Multi-species Action Plan