



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

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**REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING  
OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY GROUP TO THE RAPTORS MOU**



**12 – 14 December 2018**

**Sempach, Switzerland**



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

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## Executive Summary

The third Technical Advisory Group meeting (TAG3) of the Raptors MOU took place in Sempach, Switzerland, from 12-14 December 2018 with the participation of 14 TAG members, four observers, four host country representatives and three CMS staff. The meeting was generously sponsored by the Federal Office of the Environment (FOEN), Switzerland and hosted by the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI) at their headquarters, situated adjacent to the shores of Lake Sempach near Lucerne.

The meeting was updated on developments since TAG2 in 2015, with reports from the Coordinating Unit (CU) and the CMS Secretariat, and reviews were presented of progress with implementation of the Saker Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) and the Multi-Species Action Plan on the conservation of African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP). Ideas for the development of a Strategic Implementation Plan for the Vulture MsAP were presented, and endorsed by the TAG.

As a part of the review of the TAG work plan for 2016 – 2020, a presentation was given about the project addressing the threat of electrocution of raptors on powerlines in Mongolia, and the European Raptor Monitoring Facility was also introduced.

The TAG reviewed potential amendments to the list of species included under the Raptors MOU arising from minor taxonomic changes adopted by CMS and from a proposal of one of the Signatories.

Following a presentation by FOEN and SOI to introduce their approach to identifying sites of international importance for migratory raptors in Switzerland, the meeting agreed procedures for amending the list of sites included under the Raptors MOU.

Possibilities for extending the geographic scope of the Raptors MOU were presented to the TAG, which then conducted a SWOT analysis of the potential risks and prospects.

In a threat assessment exercise, the meeting broke out into groups representing each of the four major regions covered by the Raptors MOU – Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Asia, and Europe – to evaluate the threats to raptors in each region, and considered the optimum responses to each threat.

The TAG considered efforts to develop international Species Action Plans for migratory raptors, and compiled a list of priority species. The meeting also identified a list of species to use for pilot site network analyses.

The meeting considered emerging issues of importance for the conservation of migratory raptors and identified areas that should be a priority for future work.

Following a presentation by the Vulture Conservation Foundation on the results of a project to assess the impact of satellite tags on vultures, TAG members considered the need to monitor such studies.

The meeting provided feedback on the benefits and risks of a proposal to list Old World Vultures on CITES Appendix I.

A review process for the Action Plan to the Raptors MOU was presented, and proposals were made for streamlining and standardizing the national reporting process, to allow improved reporting on implementation at both national and international levels.

National Raptor Conservation Strategies were considered, and a draft national Raptor Conservation Report for Switzerland was presented and endorsed by the meeting.

A list of 26 Action Points from the meeting was compiled (Annex 1 to this Report) and approved.

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

1. Reinhard Schnidrig (Federal Office for the Environment, FOEN) and Lukas Jenni (Swiss Ornithological Institute, SOI) warmly welcomed all delegates to Switzerland and to Sempach.
2. Mr Nick P. Williams (Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit) especially thanked the Government of Switzerland, whose support had included hosting the meeting, and providing voluntary contributions that had previously allowed critical progress to develop the Multi-species Action Plan to conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP), and currently with recruitment of a consultant to review the MOU Action Plan. He also expressed the indebtedness of the Coordinating Unit (CU) to Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates, who have funded and hosted the Secretariats of the Dugongs and Raptors MOUs for almost ten years. He explained that the Chair of the TAG, Professor Des Thompson, would join the meeting the following day, and introduced the Vice Chair, Mr André Botha.
3. The Vice Chair expressed his pleasure at meeting old friends and thanked the Swiss hosts of the meeting, before leading all meeting participants in a round of introductions. The new Regional Representative for Asia, Mr Suresh Kumar, Department of Endangered Species Management, Wildlife Institute of India (Ministry of Environment) gave a short introductory [presentation](#).
4. Ms Sabine Herzog (FOEN) concluded the welcoming session with a [presentation](#), together with Mr Stefan Werner, on ‘Raptor Conservation in Switzerland’.
5. Mr Ralph Buij (Observer, Wageningen University) drew attention to a parallel situation in the Netherlands, where bird species in agricultural areas were decreasing, but this did not seem to be the case for forest species. There was a striking difference in the population trend of the Common Kestrel, however, which had declined by 70% in the past 25 years in the Netherlands, but was increasing in Switzerland.
6. Mr Stefan Werner and Mr Hans Schmid (SOI) explained that the increase in Switzerland was a recovery from former levels, particularly in the Alpine region. Breeding success was high and there seemed to be plenty of voles, which were the principal prey.
7. Mr Sadegh Zadegan (Iran) asked about the role of different organisations working on the Action Plan for Raptors in Switzerland. Ms Herzog, Mr Schnidrig and Mr Raffael Ayé (BirdLife Switzerland) explained that the Ministry had worked closely with a number of NGOs, including BirdLife and ProNatura at national, regional and cantonal levels, together with SOI, WWF and others.

## 2. Adoption of the Agenda

8. The Vice Chair invited comments on the provisional draft Agenda. Mr Buij offered to give a short presentation on the Vulture Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (VISA). With the addition of this under Item 8, Any Other Business, the Vice Chair declared that the Agenda was adopted.

## 3. Update since the Second Meeting of TAG

### 3.1 Review of Actions from the Second Meeting of TAG

9. Mr Williams (Coordinating Unit) gave a [presentation](#) summarizing progress on Actions Points from TAG2, details of which were available in [TAG3/Doc.3.1](#) ‘Review of Actions from the Second Meeting of TAG’. The Vice Chair asked Mr Williams to assess the impact of the website by checking the amount of traffic with the CMS IT team.
10. The meeting took note of the review.



**Action TAG3-1:** Coordinating Unit to check with the CMS Secretariat IT team the amount of traffic on the Raptors MOU website.

### 3.2 Report from the Coordinating Unit

11. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) summarizing progress with key developments related to the Raptors MOU. The meeting took note of the review and the Vice Chair opened the floor for discussion.
12. Mr Zadegan and Mr Nyambayar Batbayar (Mongolia) asked about the timing of the third meeting of the Signatories (MOS3) of the Raptors MOU. Mr Williams explained that three main issues had delayed MOS3. No Signatory had met the commitment under the MOU to prepare a national or regional Action Plan for raptor conservation, and more time was needed to allow progress with this. No Signatory had yet offered to host the meeting, and the unexpected timing of the CMS COP13 in India in the spring of 2020 has clashed with the earlier plan to hold MOS3 at that time. The current thinking was to hold MOS3 in 2021.

### 3.3 Report on the implementation of the SakerGAP

13. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) summarizing progress on implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan (SakerGAP), details of which were available in [TAG3/Doc.3.3](#) 'Report on implementation of the SakerGAP'.
14. Mr Mohammed Shobrak (Saudi Arabia) raised the issue of connectivity, and referred to an initiative in Italy led by Fernando Spina that was compiling satellite tracking data. He suggested that this provided an opportunity to obtain useful data about the movement of Saker Falcons. Mr Williams said that connectivity was an important issue for CMS, especially in the context of the post-2020 framework. He recalled an individual satellite-tagged Amur Falcon that had flown through 19 countries, and a study of Swiss Red Kites migrating to Iberia and suffering higher mortality outside of Switzerland. These were the kind of research efforts that the Raptors MOU was really keen to support.
15. Mr Shobrak asked whether the new Raptor Conservation Foundation established by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan might be interested in supporting this kind of work. Mr Williams replied that it was too early to say how this Foundation would work, but ideas from stakeholders about where raptor conservation activities needed support were welcome. The Raptors MOU was trying to position itself so that it would have a suite of projects that involved a number of Range States, which the Foundation might find attractive to support.
16. Mr Mátyás Prommer (Hungary) thanked Mr Williams for the ambition of the SakerGAP, but expressed concern about the lack of capacity in the Coordinating Unit, especially considering Ms Renell's departure at the end of 2018. Mr Williams said that an advertisement had been placed for a temporary contractor to provide support while a replacement for Ms Renell was recruited. Three part-time consultants had also been hired to support coordination of efforts to implement the SakerGAP. Mr Williams thanked Mr Prommer for his caution, but he considered it essential to be ambitious.
17. The Vice Chair mentioned the five key tasks for 2018 – 2020 with which Mr Williams had concluded his presentation, and stressed that TAG members were welcome to provide feedback on these. Mr Williams invited the TAG to review and provide feedback of the Saker GAP Implementation Plan as soon as possible.

**Action TAG3-2:** TAG to provide feedback to the Coordinating Unit before the end of 2018 on the five key tasks for 2018-2020 identified in the SakerGAP draft Implementation Plan.

### 3.4 Report on the implementation of the Vulture MsAP

18. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) summarizing progress on implementation of the Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP), details of which were available in [TAG3/Doc.3.4](#) 'Report on the implementation of the Vulture MsAP'. Mr Williams agreed that the Coordinating Unit would share a briefing with the TAG on the New Egyptian Vulture LIFE Project.
19. Mr Munir Virani (Peregrine Fund) suggested that it might be confusing for Signatories to be asked to develop national strategies for raptor conservation when international strategies for particular species were already being developed. It might be more logical to develop the national strategies first.
20. Mr Williams considered the process to be clear. There was an MOU in place and Signatories had committed to develop national or regional raptor conservation strategies which should take account of the international Action Plan annexed to the MOU. They would need to identify the species (from the 93 covered by the MOU) and activities appropriate for their country. In addition, Range States of the Saker Falcon and of any of the 15 vulture species covered by the SakerGAP and Vulture MsAP, respectively, are encouraged to utilise the critical information in these international Action Plans to assist them in developing their national strategies.
21. Mr Shobrak suggested that it might be useful to prepare a guideline on how to develop a national raptor conservation strategy. Mr Williams replied that the Coordinating Unit had published [Guidelines for Preparing National or Regional Raptor Conservation and Management Strategies](#) in July 2012. Unfortunately, no Signatory had yet submitted a strategy, although some were known to be in preparation. One of the reasons for postponing MOS3 was to deploy resources to actively promote development of the raptor conservation strategies. Funding, limited to a maximum of 10,000 USD per country, had been made available to Signatories to develop their strategies. Eleven countries had applied but the total amount requested exceeded that which was currently available. It was planned to support up to six workshops in different countries to assist them in developing their raptor conservation strategies. The Vice Chair considered the low response rate to the availability of funding to be disappointing.
22. Mr Virani reported that he had sent a message to Charles Musyoki, a former TAG member with a senior position in the Kenya Wildlife Service, and that TAG had his full support on this issue.
23. Mr Pritchard (Strategic Planning Consultant for the Raptors MOU) gave a [presentation](#) introducing ideas for the development of a Strategic Implementation Plan for the Vulture MsAP. Mr Buij appreciated the idea of the implementation plan being a living document with a rolling window of activities. It would be important for the success of the plan for practitioners in different countries to be connected and aware of challenges and opportunities. Such an approach would allow an active, living exchange of ideas, which would feed into the Vulture Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (VISA) project that he would be introducing under Agenda item 8, Any Other Business.
24. Mr Virani and Mr Neil Deacon (Zimbabwe) warned that preparing documents for the use by governments was not an effective way of achieving conservation aims. Encouraging the implementation of activities on the ground was more important. Mr Deacon added that it was often committed individuals that drove activities in Africa, and that these individuals often benefitted from guidance.

25. Mr Pritchard said that the Vulture MsAP Strategic Implementation Plan was intended to reach out to all stakeholders involved in vulture conservation, not just governments. Its form had not yet been decided and it could be a platform or clearing house mechanism, to allow people on the ground to see what they were doing in context, make linkages, and request or provide help.
26. Mr Buij asked whether the strategy could be made available as an interactive website. Mr Pritchard replied that he had been asked to prepare a document, but he could envisage a range of ways in which it could be a living, connecting tool.
27. Mr Williams recalled that one of the Vulture MsAP Flagship Projects developed for the Summit for Flyways in Abu Dhabi in April 2018 had been about preparing an electronic version of the Vulture MsAP. He envisaged the first phase of development as a searchable document. This could be followed by a second, more complex phase comprising a number of bespoke search facilities relating to countries and species, possibly accessible through an online database. A third stage might involve a mechanism for interactivity where users could submit information. This could be a key way in which to encourage engagement of a wide range of stakeholders.
28. The Vice Chair stressed the important role played by individuals and NGOs in influencing governments to meet their international commitments. He suggested that the Coordinating Unit could provide letters of support to organizations and individuals to strengthen their case when approaching governments seeking resources or support to implement the Vulture MsAP.
29. Mr Virani said that it would be important for the Vulture MsAP to include a means of tracking and evaluating progress so that achievements could be assessed when the timeline of the MsAP ended in 2029. The Vice Chair pointed out that the Vulture MsAP would need to adopt different approaches in different regions, with more intense activities required in Africa, and to lesser extent in Asia, than in Europe.
30. Mr Kumar said that, in India, the Vulture MsAP was communicated to the national Government, but planning and activities were also needed at state level. Communication and coordination between federal and state levels was often inadequate, which challenged the effectiveness of planning and implementation of conservation activities. It would be helpful if CMS was able to encourage and facilitate this communication.
31. The Vice Chair added that communication between different levels of government, and general communication between stakeholders, was an important issue in other countries as well, and asked whether a communication strategy was a part of Mr Pritchard's brief.
32. Mr Pritchard replied that the scope of what the Vulture MsAP implementation strategy needed to address was still flexible. The needs for implementation planning were different in different regions and he was not attempting to standardise approaches. The strategy would include an overview of areas where failures needed addressing.
33. The Vice Chair remarked that vulture conservation in South Asia was highly focussed on tackling poisoning from the pharmaceutical drug diclofenac. He again emphasised the importance of individuals encouraging governments to draft national plans, and the role of capacity development and good communication in facilitating this process.
34. The meeting took note of Mr Williams's review of the Vulture MsAP and of Mr Pritchard's Strategic Implementation Plan.

**Action TAG3-3:** Coordinating Unit to consider providing letters of support, on request, to organizations and individuals approaching governments to implement the Vulture MsAP.

**Action TAG3-4:** Coordinating Unit to share briefing with TAG on the EV New LIFE Project.

### 3.5 Report from the CMS Secretariat

35. Mr Tilman Schneider (Acting Head of CMS Avian Team) gave a [presentation](#) summarizing key developments since TAG2 on CMS-led initiatives and relevant CMS COP12 outcomes, details of which were available in [TAG3/Doc.3.5/Rev.1](#) 'Report from the CMS Secretariat'.
36. Mr Zadegan said the Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT), which had been developed for the Mediterranean region, was being extended to the Arabian Peninsula, Iran and Iraq.
37. Mr Williams clarified that the MIKT process had been developed under the Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds (IKB) Task Force established by CMS COP11. The Mediterranean project had been the pilot programme, and extension of the approach had resulted in new data. The processes were separate in different parts of the world but were all within the overall scope of CMS.
38. Ms Jones (Birdlife International) asked about the development of the Energy Task Force (ETF) in Africa and whether there was engagement with Power Africa. Mr Schneider replied that Africa was engaged with the Task Force activities, and the Vice Chair added that there had been recent meetings with representatives from eastern and southern Africa. The approach in South Africa where there was a successful partnership between the utilities companies and conservation interests was seen as a good model to follow in other regions.
39. Mr Virani raised the issue of Vulture Safe Zones (VSZ), and suggested that a definition of this concept should be addressed by TAG. The concept of diclofenac-free zones had been successful in South Asia, but there was a need to expand the concept in other parts of the world. Mr Williams added that the VSZ concept was a key outcome highlighted during the development of the Vulture MsAP. BirdLife International was preparing a paper on VSZs that it was hoped would be transferable to the African context.
40. The Vice Chair said that a meeting was planned in early 2019 to address this issue and produce a broad framework and categories for VSZs. Work would initially concentrate on southern Africa, and it was hoped it could be extended more widely into networks in east and West Africa.
41. Mr Buij and Mr Shobrak suggested that cooperation between AEWA and the Raptors MOU over common issues such as lead poisoning and climate change could be helpful.
42. Mr Batbayar said raptors from Russia, Kazakhstan and Mongolia were getting poisoned in China, and that electrocution was also a major issue in all these countries. Russia and China were not CMS Parties but there was a pressing need to engage them more.
43. Mr Schneider replied that although these countries were not Parties, poisoning was a global issue and meetings were also open to non-Party experts. There had, however, been no Chinese or Russian delegates at the second meeting of the Preventing Poisoning Working Group (PPWG) of the CMS Scientific Council. On a positive note, Argentina had banned the import of certain pesticides that had been shown to be negatively affecting Andean Condors.



44. Mr Schneider added that CMS was currently in the process of attempting to establish a new Task Force on illegal hunting in Asia. He hoped to engage with these countries by including them in this initiative.
45. The Vice Chair asked why CMS had missed an opportunity to elevate avian issues at a recent joint CMS-CITES African Lion Range State Meeting. Mr Schneider replied that this had been caused by an unfortunate and regrettable technical organisational issue.

**Action TAG3-5:** TAG to consider if there was a need to address the definition of the concept of Vulture Safe Zones after the publication of the paper by BirdLife International.

#### 4. Review of the TAG Work Plan 2016 - 2020

46. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) providing an overview of the status of activities in the TAG Work plan 2016 – 2020, details of which were available in [TAG3/Doc.4](#) 'Review of the TAG Work plan 2016 – 2020'.
47. Mr Prommer said that he had compiled accessible, digestible summaries of available online guidance, including key words and links, to ensure that stakeholders were well informed, and to avoid duplication of effort. Mr Williams recalled that Mr David Stroud had suggested that such 'guides to guidance' would be useful when addressing a range of issues. Mr Prommer had made a good start with this work.
48. The Vice Chair and Mr Shobrak expressed concern about possibly duplicating the IUCN guidance, and the Vice Chair suggested that IUCN might be in a position to update some of their guidance in light of the experience of Raptors MOU Signatories. The guidance prepared by the Species Survival Commission (SSC) Reintroduction Specialist Group was a case in point.
49. Ms Jones said that if TAG felt that governments were not using good guidance that was available, it would be good to compile the best examples of practical guidance and make them readily accessible. There was no need to develop new guidance, but it would be valuable to draw attention to existing best practice.
50. Mr Williams concluded that TAG wanted to continue producing 'guides to guidance', that Mr Stroud had made suggestions, and that Mr Prommer had made a start with the compilation of one such guide focussed on the threats posed by energy infrastructure. The Vice Chair said that he would be attending a meeting of SSC SG Chairs in October 2019 where he would be in a position to draw attention to guidance that was in need of updating.
51. Mr Batbayar gave a [presentation](#) to highlight the issue of electrocution titled 'Addressing the threat of electrocution in Mongolia', which referred to Activity 2.6 under the TAG Work plan.
52. Mr Fernando Feás (Spain) asked about the number of electricity poles in Mongolia and Mr Batbayar replied that there were more than 38,000 poles supporting about 4000 km of power lines. Mr Feás calculated that they could all be made safer, as indicated in the presentation, for a cost of less than one million US dollars, which was not such a high amount. Mr Batbayar replied that this should be possible, and that it would reduce the mortality of raptors (particularly Saker Falcon) by 80-90%.
53. Mr Ayé asked about technical specifications of mitigation measures and Mr Batbayar replied that a number of measures had been tried, but solutions such as rotating mirrors and PVC pipes would have high maintenance costs.

54. Mr Williams continued his presentation reviewing the TAG Work plan 2016 – 2020. Mr Virani and Mr Buij drew attention to recent work on the Tawny Eagle showing that the species was usually the first to visit carcasses, and so could be used as an alert for cases of poisoning. If birds were tagged, their movements could be followed and used to indicate potential instances of poisoning. Ms Jones suggested that Mr Buij and Mr Virani should prepare a proposal and circulate it for comment to TAG members after the meeting.
55. The Vice Chair suggested that CU could send a letter of support for this work, including a request for park authorities to undertake tagging of Tawny Eagles, so that their behaviour could be followed as an indicator of poisoning.
56. Mr Jari Valkama (Finland) gave a [presentation](#) titled 'European Raptor Biomonitoring Facility' on behalf of Guy Duke, the Chair of the programme. Mr Deacon asked what samples were being collected and Mr Valkama replied that the monitoring mainly involved blood and feathers, and that there was a long time series. Mr Buij added that livers from Common Buzzard had been provided as a part of the programme.
57. Mr Virani gave a presentation titled 'Saving the World's Raptors' about the Global Raptor Information Network (GRIN), an initiative for which the Raptors MOU was a partner. Mr Pritchard asked, regarding possible links between GRIN and the Raptors MOU, whether GRIN included any activities relating to policy objectives or frameworks such as the Vulture MsAP. Mr Virani replied that GRIN was a repository of data that could be used to answer questions about a range of issues. The aim was for it to become a powerhouse for raptor data, including tracking data, across the world. Mr Williams said that data from GRIN had been used in the Vulture MsAP. The Raptors MOU was very supportive of the initiative, although many activities were beyond its scope.
58. Mr Zadegan asked about potential links between national reporting to the Raptors MOU and national reporting to CMS. Mr Williams stressed that CMS was working to harmonise reporting and reduce the burden on Signatories and Parties as much as possible. The report to the Raptors MOU would likely be more detailed than the one to CMS, and Mr Williams envisaged the report to CMS being the starting point of the report to the Raptors MOU, with more details being added about raptor conservation in the country. The Coordinating Unit was trying to create a process that other MOUs in the CMS family could adopt.

**Action TAG3-6:** TAG should continue with efforts to provide accessible, digestible guidance ("Guides to Guidance") on measures to address various key threats to migratory raptors. Mr Botha to raise this at meeting of IUCN SSC Specialist Group chairs in October 2019.

**Action TAG3-7:** Ralph Buij and Munir Virani to prepare a proposal about tagging Tawny Eagles, to follow their behaviour as indicators of poisoning, and to circulate to TAG members for comment after this meeting.

## 4.1 MOU – Amendments to species list, site list, geographical scope

### 4.1.1 Amendments to the list of species on Annex I to the Raptors MOU

59. Ms Jones (BirdLife International) gave a [presentation](#) briefing the meeting on a proposed taxonomic amendment to the text of the Raptors MOU following the adoption of new taxonomic sources by CMS, as presented in [TAG3/Doc.4.1d](#) 'Technical amendments to the text of the Raptors MOU'. The meeting was in agreement that this amendment, involving the addition of the recently recognised order Accipitriformes to the text of the MOU, was needed.

60. Ms Jones continued with her presentation, reporting proposed amendments to the list of species on Annex I of the MOU detailed in [TAG3/Doc.4.1a](#) 'Amendments to the list of species on Annex I to the Raptors MOU'. The species under consideration for inclusion in Annex I were Northern Boobook (*Ninox japonica*) and Bonelli's Eagle (*Aquila fasciata*). The proposed changes also affected the categorization of these and other species in Annex 3, Table 1 of the MOU. TAG3 agreed unanimously that Northern Boobook (*Ninox japonica*) should be added to Annex I of the MOU to replace Brown Boobook (*Ninox scutulata*).
61. Ms Jones gave a short [presentation](#) summarizing issues the TAG would need to consider as a basis for the decision as to whether or not to add Bonelli's Eagle to the Appendix. Discussion concerning the status of Bonelli's Eagle focussed on whether post-juvenile dispersal met the CMS definition of migration, and how the precautionary principle should be applied to species for which different stages of the life cycle adopt different migratory strategies.
62. Mr Botha, Mr Feás, Mr Deacon and Mr Virani agreed that more information on the migration patterns of wild Bonelli's Eagles was needed before a decision could be made. They felt that available evidence suggested that adult Bonelli's Eagles were not migratory, and that an unknown but probably small proportion of juveniles dispersed from their natal areas. They were concerned that including Bonelli's Eagle on Annex I of the MOU might set a precedent for other essentially non-migratory species that undertook post-juvenile dispersal, and that this might devalue the MOU. Mr Shobrak and Mr Feás suggested that a category of 'more data needed' or 'under observation' might focus attention on data deficient species.
63. Mr Williams said that some of the data supporting movements of Bonelli's Eagles came from captive birds that had been released, and these data should probably be excluded from consideration. He pointed out that a Signatory State with a population of Bonelli's Eagles felt that the population was not being protected when individuals visited other countries, and that TAG should consider this when making its decision. He added that Steven Garnett had included Bonelli's Eagle as a migratory species in his recent analysis of all avian species covered by the Appendices to CMS.
64. Mr Buij said that without more precise definitions of migration under CMS, it was difficult to decide. Spanish data suggested that possibly 10% of juvenile Bonelli's Eagles dispersed across international borders, but without more details about what CMS considered to be a 'significant proportion' of the population, it was impossible to decide if this was enough to allow the species to be defined as migratory. If it was enough, it seemed likely that many additional species would need to be added to the Appendix.
65. Mr Deacon, Ms Jones and Mr Botha compared Bonelli's Eagle to many vulture species, which dispersed as juveniles but became more sedentary as adults. The scale of their movements was, however, considered to be greater, and many vulture species showed distinct patterns of movement rather than the wandering suggested by the term 'dispersal'.
66. The Vice Chair considered the case for adding Bonelli's Eagle to Appendix not to be persuasive. He concluded that the TAG's decision on this listing was negative, but that the Coordinating Unit should contact Israel for more data that might support their case for consideration in future.
67. Ms Jones asked whether there was a standard form that Signatories could use to propose species for listings. This would have the advantage of including short statements of guidance, for example about not including data from birds that had originated or been held in captivity. There was a form for listing sites, which included guidance, and something similar for species would have definite advantages. Mr Williams replied that the idea had been considered in the past, and he agreed that it would be worth considering again.

68. Mr Virani mentioned the Lagger Falcon as a species that should be considered for inclusion in Table 1 of Annex 3. He considered this to be one of the most threatened falcon species in Asia, which was trapped for use as decoys, and numbers were decreasing rapidly, for example in western Rajasthan. Ms Jones replied that the reason for the exclusion of Lagger Falcon from Table 1 was summarised in the document 'Proposals for Amendments to the Raptors MOU and/or its Annexes: List of African-Eurasian Migratory Birds of Prey (Annex 1)' submitted to MOS2 ([UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/13](#)).
69. Mr Shobrak said that there was concern about the status of Peregrine Falcon in Saudi Arabia. The form that occurred there, Barbary Falcon, appeared to be declining and deserved to be re-evaluated. He asked whether status could be considered at population, rather than species level under the Raptors MOU. Ms Jones replied that AEWA considered all species at population level, and said that Barbary Falcon was not a separate species, but there was no problem with a Range State working at population level in their National Strategy. Mr Williams added that the ability to take additional measures for populations of concern was another reason for countries to produce their own National Raptor Conservation Strategies.

#### 4.1.2 Amendments to the list of sites important for migratory raptors

70. Ms Jones gave a [presentation](#) with a summary of progress since MOS2 on updating the list of sites (Table 3 of the MOU Action Plan). The rationale behind the proposed amendments to the list of sites was detailed in [TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1](#) 'Amendments to the list of sites important for migratory raptors' and the amendments themselves in [TAG3/Doc.4.1b/Rev1/Annex 2](#) 'Overview of proposed changes to draft Table 3'.
71. Mr Pritchard made an observation on the request by the European Union (EU) for the removal from Table 3, Annex 3 of the MOU of Category D species (those species currently listed as qualifying at Special Protection Areas (SPAs) but only occurring at the SPA in 'non-significant' numbers). He pointed out the difference between presence in non-significant numbers, or presence in a non-significant manner. If a site was the most important in a country in terms of numbers present, it should not be removed from the list, even if the numbers were considered to be 'non-significant'.
72. Ms Jones replied that BirdLife had simply followed the instruction of the EU to remove Category D species. Mr Williams added that the EU, representing 28 Member States had given clear instructions about what they were expecting. Mr Pritchard's point might be valid, but it was probably too late to change the approach to Category D species with regard to SPAs.
73. Mr Williams outlined the next steps until MOS3. Once TAG was satisfied with the process for amending the List of Sites, it would be circulated to Signatories, who would be given a couple of months to respond. Bilateral communication with Signatories would be conducted as necessary to finalise the list, before circulation of the final version by end of 2019. The consolidated List of Sites could then be proposed for formal adoption by Signatories at MOS3.
74. 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'.

**Action TAG3-8:** On behalf of TAG, the Coordinating Unit will propose to Signatories at MOS3 that they consider adding the Order Acciptriformes to the MOU text and its Annexes.

**Action TAG3-9:** On behalf of TAG, the Coordinating Unit will propose to Signatories at MoS3 that they consider adding Northern Boobook to replace Brown Boobook in Annex I of the MOU.

**Action TAG3-10:** Coordinating Unit to write to Israel advising that, based on current information, TAG felt unable to support a proposal to list Bonelli's Eagle on Annex 1 to the Raptors MOU but that further evidence showing its migratory behavior of wild birds would be welcome.

#### 4.1.3 The Swiss approach to national sites of international importance for Raptors

75. Mr Schnidrig and Mr Werner gave a [presentation](#) entitled 'Key national sites of international importance for raptor conservation - The Swiss approach'. The Vice Chair observed a parallel with many countries in Africa where for some species, there were no 'sites' big enough to be classified as key sites for raptors. He also remarked that the impressive scale, quality and quantity of available data for Switzerland would be difficult to achieve elsewhere in the flyway.
76. Mr Batbayar said that mountain ranges with high numbers of raptors in Mongolia did not meet international criteria, and so had not been included in the list of key sites. Mr Williams considered this to be an opportunity for Mongolia as a Signatory to establish appropriate protected areas in their National Raptor Conservation Strategy to be developed under the MOU.
77. Mr Deacon expressed concern that the Swiss approach resulted in a number of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) being considered inappropriate as key sites for raptors, and that this might devalue the perceived importance of IBAs. Mr Williams stressed that the Swiss approach took the IBAs as a baseline, and applied considerable levels of new information, legislative interest and commitment to achieve a higher quality list. It should be viewed as a significant enhancement to the IBA process, which admittedly many countries on the flyway would not be in a position to implement.
78. Mr Ayé pointed out that a major omission in the Swiss IBA list was bottleneck sites for migratory raptors.
79. Mr Williams added that Switzerland had increased the number of sites identified as being important for raptors, and that legal protection of these sites should lead to implementation on the ground. These were strong reasons to endorse the proposed Swiss approach.
80. Ms Jones explained that key sites for raptors had been identified across all Range States of the MOU, and that new Signatories were presented with an outline list of sites, which they were then welcome to enhance.
81. Mr Virani suggested that the Swiss approach would make a good model for other Signatories.
82. Mr Buij observed that a new breeding bird atlas had recently been published in the Netherlands, and that the data could be used in the same way as in Switzerland to enhance the List of Key Sites for raptors which, for example, did not include any sites for Red Kite or Montagu's Harrier because they did not occur at IBAs.
83. The Vice Chair added that Amur Falcon roosts also mostly fell outside IBAs.



84. Mr Kumar observed that there were about 700 Protected Areas in India, and the list of 544 IBAs had recently been revised. IBAs had no legal status, but were being increasingly used during consideration of development proposals.
85. Mr Williams said that Switzerland was seeking feedback from the TAG to take forward their approach to raptor conservation at the national level, including the identification of key sites. The Vice Chair sought recognition from the TAG for the Swiss approach, and suggested that it might be useful for them to present it as an example at the next MOS. Mr Schnidrig agreed that Switzerland would be able to provide guidance on their approach to developing their national approach to raptor conservation.
86. The Vice Chair concluded that the TAG recognised the approach, and suggested that a paper could be prepared by Switzerland for presentation at MOS3.

**Action TAG3-11:** Coordinating Unit to invite Switzerland to prepare a paper for MOS3 on their national approach to raptor conservation, including the way in which key sites of international importance for migratory raptors had been identified.

#### 4.1.4 MOU – Amendments to the geographical scope of the Raptors MOU

87. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) based on [TAG3/Doc.4.1c](#) titled ‘Amendments to the geographic scope of the Raptors MOU’, providing a rationale for possible changes to Annex 2 of the Agreement. He then facilitated a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis by the TAG to assess the technical and practical benefits for raptor conservation of expanding the geographic scope of the Raptors MOU.
88. Mr Virani asked how the boundary had been demarcated in the first place. Mr Williams described the series of meetings, driven by the UK and UAE that had resulted in agreement over the current boundary of the MOU, which caution had prevented from expanding further.
89. Mr Jean-Marc Thiollay stressed the importance of Georgia, Turkey, and Lebanon becoming Signatories because of the scale of raptor persecution in these countries. Mr Williams pointed out that Lebanon has signed the Raptors MOU in 2015. He agreed that this was an important threat, and said that CMS was addressing it to some extent through the IKB initiative in the Mediterranean region.
90. Strengths
  - Allows more comprehensive coverage and addresses concerns about incomplete coverage of certain flyway populations (e.g. Amur Falcon, Eurasian Hobby, etc.).
  - Increases effectiveness of conservation by protecting additional globally threatened species.
  - Enhances synergy with existing initiatives such as the East Asian - Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP) and the Asian Raptor Research and Conservation network (ARRCN).
  - Increases knowledge of birds of prey, their threats and effective conservation actions.
  - Engages more Governments in raptor conservation.
  - Underpinned by science.
  - Enhances synergy with AEWA CAF initiative.
91. Weaknesses
  - Increases activities of already-stretched Coordinating Unit.
  - Time and increased technical capacity needed to identify new sites and species.
  - Budgetary implications.

- Risk of distracting from current relatively advanced stage of implementation in existing Signatory countries.
- Lack of development of National Raptor Conservation Strategies by Signatories in existing region suggests it may be premature to expand the geographic scope of the MOU.

92. Opportunities

- Promotes wider Governmental interest.
- Potential stepping stone for Signatories to join CMS.
- Could enhance synergies with existing CMS initiatives such as EAAFP.
- Promotes ecosystem services value of raptors beyond existing range of Raptors MOU.
- Promotes raptor conservation awareness among other ministries.
- Engages key countries involved in the major challenge of trade in raptors in East Asia.
- Allows complete coverage of Eurasia by the Raptors MOU.
- Increases relevance of MOU activities to Russia and China, which might encourage them to become Signatories.
- Enhances funding opportunities for raptor conservation in the region. Japan and South Korea are potential new donors.
- Enhances reputations of conservation organisations in the region.

93. Threats

- Dilution of focus could lead to diffusion of effectiveness.
- Need for more TAG experts would lead to more expensive meetings.
- Potential high cost of interpretation and translation into more languages at MOSs (although Mr Batbayar disagreed that this was a threat, considering English to be sufficiently widely used in the proposed region of extension).
- Possible loss of geographical coherence due to exceeding a biologically sensible limit.

94. Mr Williams concluded by saying that the next steps would be to revise and renew the contract with BirdLife International to follow up this piece of work before assessing the interest of the Signatories and approaching prospective additional Range States. He suggested that the aim should be to have the technical and scientific situation in place before MOS3, where Signatories would be in a position to consider the political aspects and to decide the way forward.

**Action TAG3-12:** Coordinating Unit to re-contract BirdLife International to include consideration of enlargement of the geographic scope of the Raptors MoU, before assessing the interest of the Signatories States and approaching the prospective additional Range States.

## 4.2 Threat assessment

95. Mr Botha handed over to Prof Des Thompson (Chair). The Chair especially thanked FOEN and SOI for hosting the meeting.
96. Ms Jones introduced an exercise based on [TAG3/Doc.4.2a](#) 'Species action planning for the most threatened migratory birds of prey'. The participants were divided into groups representing four regions covered by the MOU: Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. Each group assessed the most important threats to species listed in Category 1, Table 1, Annex 3 of the MOU in their region, and provided feedback on the measures that were most urgently needed in each region to address these threats.

#### 4.2.1 Sub-Saharan Africa

97. Mr Deacon reported that the greatest threats to raptors in Africa were landscape changes driven by expansion and intensification of agriculture and deforestation. Additional threats were mining, and infrastructure development, particularly in relation to energy and roads. These developments were encroaching on wilderness areas, many of which were disappearing.
98. Human/wildlife conflicts had impacts on raptors, the most destructive of which was poisoning, and these required management, socially, biologically, and economically.
99. Appropriate management of National Parks was an important response to threats, and Nairobi National Park provided an example of successful management of human/wildlife conflicts.

#### 4.2.2 North Africa/Middle East

100. Mr Shobrak reported that poisoning, hunting and trapping had been identified as major threats, and that renewable energy was an emerging issue that was likely to have an increasing impact in future. Powerlines were a big problem in some areas. There was a strong link between poisoning and agricultural intensification. Rapid urban development, and especially garbage dumps with their associated risks of poisoning and plastic pollution, also represented a growing threat.
101. Management of human/wildlife conflicts was a growing need. A start had been made with communicating with the trade ministry in Saudi Arabia to ban chemicals that were affecting wildlife.
102. Captive breeding for falconry was a particular issue in this region, with many hybrids being produced.

#### 4.2.3 Europe

103. Mr Prommer reported that the main threats in Europe, in order of importance, were posed by agriculture, forestry, poisoning, electrocution, renewable energy, and hunting.
104. There was potential for measures under the EU Common Agricultural Policy to support particular types of management at national level. Individual Member States decided how to spend funding under the Common Agricultural Policy, and it would be helpful if there was an EU guideline on best practice.
105. Illegal poisoning by gamekeepers was a major problem in some regions of Europe, and approaches through EU LIFE anti-poisoning projects had achieved some success. The EU also had control over hunting policy, and was in a position to influence hunting on the migration routes of European breeding birds in the Middle East through its influence at governmental level.
106. Dealing with the issue of electrocution in Europe was problematic, and a possible solution might be to promote EU legislation regarding the installation of bird-friendly grids.
107. Renewable energy programmes, particularly windfarms, caused habitat loss as well as collision risk. There were guidelines for windfarm planning that recommend no windfarm development in protected areas, but there were few protected areas whose boundaries were related to raptor distribution. There was a need to identify sensitive areas at the micro-landscape scale. Various methods involving cameras, alarms and shutdown on demand had been deployed at windfarms with varying degrees of success.

#### 4.2.4 Asia

108. Mr Batbayar reported that in Asia, the main threats to raptors were land use changes (especially agricultural intensification), powerlines, trapping and chemicals. A major issue, more serious than in Europe and Africa, was lack of communication between countries, so that, for example, while the threats associated with powerlines were becoming well known in Mongolia (and also India), this was not the case in other countries.
109. Recent success in addressing trapping in India suggested that this might be possible elsewhere in Asia. Similarly, a lot of work had been done to control use of diclofenac in India, and there was now a need to disseminate information to other countries in Asia.
110. Use of agricultural chemicals in Central Asia, especially pesticides was thought to be a major problem but data were lacking.
111. Land use changes on a massive scale were affecting China, India and all countries in the region in different ways, with agricultural intensification (including irrigation) and urbanization having been identified as serious issues. Protected areas were a part of the solution, but they often only offered partial protection of a small selection of species. An unwelcome effect of increasing urbanization was the growing use of garbage dumps by raptors, which tracking studies showed now formed major wintering sites for species such as Black Kite and Steppe Eagle.

#### 4.2.4 Species Action Planning

112. Ms Jones gave a [presentation](#) based on [TAG3/Doc.4.2a](#) 'Species action planning for the most threatened migratory birds of prey'. She then sought further specific feedback on additional species which would benefit from Action Planning, as listed in column G of [TAG3/Doc.4.2a/Annex 2](#) 'Raptors MOU – Gap analysis of species action planning' and opened a discussion of species for which the Raptors MOU could encourage the preparation of Species Action Plans (SAPs).
113. Mr Botha said that Black Harrier was distributed in only two countries, South Africa and Namibia, and that the best approach to preparing a SAP would be for the government of South Africa to take responsibility. They had already prepared a Biodiversity Action Plan for Bearded Vulture. Mr Botha suggested that the TAG should write to Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa raising the issue of need for joint AP with Namibia for the conservation of the Black Harrier.
114. Mr Prommer reported that an International Action Plan for the Steppe Eagle had been initiated at a meeting in September 2018 of the Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network. Mr Virani, Mr Shobrak and Mr Batbayar stressed the importance of involving practitioners from all parts of the range of Steppe Eagle in this plan, to maximise the chances of implementation throughout the range, and to ensure that all existing activities were included.
115. Mr Batbayar added that this was a key study species in Mongolia and that its extensive geographic range included five or six flyways. Research for the Action Plan should include analysis of genetic samples and all available data on movements.
116. Mr Williams recalled that Steppe Eagle had been added to CMS Appendix I at COP12 in 2017. He considered it possible that the Steppe Eagle Action Plan could be developed under the auspices of the Raptors MOU, which was in a strong position to bring Range States together, enhance knowledge and facilitate development of the Plan.

117. Mr Prommer proposed this arrangement by email to the group developing the Plan arising from the Russian meeting, who were at the stage of collecting data on migration and movements of Steppe Eagle. An immediate response from the group indicated that they would prepare a letter to the Raptors MOU seeking support from the TAG for the preparation of a global Action Plan for the Steppe Eagle.
118. Mr Virani said that Tawny Eagle was an under-researched species in Africa that was in need of an Action Plan. It was now understood that Tawny Eagle was often the first species to perish at poisoning sites, and a Pan-African Tawny Eagle project had been launched, together with a similar project on Wahlberg's Eagle led by Mr Buij. One of the aims of these projects was to explore possibilities for using this behaviour as an early warning of poisoning.
119. The Chair remarked that Tawny Eagle had been neglected in the past because it was relatively common, and vultures were considered a higher priority.
120. Mr Buij pointed out that Tawny Eagle was suffering the same threats as vultures and was particularly sensitive to poisoning. Mr Virani agreed, but considered Steppe Eagle to be the highest priority for Action Planning, although there were big, unexplained gaps in the distribution of Tawny Eagles in South Asia. Mr Botha suggested that for Tawny Eagle, a good approach might be to gather more data before proceeding to an Action Plan. Implementation of the Vulture MsAP would benefit Tawny Eagles.
121. Mr Buij considered Beaudouin's Snake-eagle to be a priority species for Action Planning. It was rare and poorly known, appeared to be declining, and bred in areas of dense human population, where habitat loss was an issue. Ms Jones and Mr Virani suggested that it might be premature to prepare an Action Plan for Beaudouin's Snake-eagle because the threats it faced appeared to be poorly known and it would be difficult to define the necessary actions. Mr Buij disagreed.
122. Mr Batbayar said that Pallas's Fish Eagle was another species in need of urgent attention. It was declining rapidly, and would be the subject of a satellite tracking study in Mongolia in 2019.
123. Ms Jones suggested that Steller's Sea Eagle would also benefit from concerted conservation action, and Mr Thiollay added that a comprehensive monograph of the species had recently been published.
124. Mr Shobrak suggested that since Eastern Imperial Eagle and Steppe Eagle had strong similarities in behaviour and ecology, it might be worth considering preparation of a joint Action Plan. Mr Virani said that there was already an MsAP for Old World Vultures, and that it might be worth expanding Mr Shobrak's suggestion to include more Eagle species in a joint Action Plan.
125. A discussion ensued in which Mr Botha, Mr Shobrak and the Chair agreed that it would be worth considering the inclusion of a number of eagle species in a joint Action Plan, but Mr Prommer disagreed, on the grounds that there was little overlap between experts on different species, and that different species had different needs and levels of knowledge.
126. Mr Buij suggested that it might be more logical to produce joint action plans for species at regional level, giving the example of range-restricted buzzard species in West Africa that had similar, fragmented populations and faced similar threats such as trade.
127. Ms Jones agreed that regional joint Action Plans made more sense than the suggested multi-species plan for eagles. Multi-species plans needed to address common threats, and regional plans would probably be easier to sell to governments.



128. The Chair concluded that there was strong support for Action Plans, but that consensus had not been reached on multi-species plans. The Steppe Eagle Action Plan had been initiated, and other priority species for action planning were Black Harrier, Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, and Pallas's Fish Eagle. Tawny Eagle was also a priority, but more data were probably needed before an Action Plan could be prepared.
129. Ms Jones noted that encouraging the preparation of Species Action Plans was a task of the TAG, and that clarity would be needed when reporting back to MOS3.
130. Ms Jones gave a [presentation](#) based on [TAG3/Doc.4.2b](#) 'Selection of pilot species for site network analysis'. She sought feedback from the TAG to identify a sub-set of about 10 representative Annex 1 species (including species with different ecologies and migration strategies) to use in an initial analysis of the comprehensiveness of the site network.
131. The Chair suggested that feedback on the selection of pilot species for site network analysis should be undertaken overnight and that the selected species should be discussed the following day.
132. The next day, Mr Virani reported that TAG members had agreed overnight that the following would be good pilot species for this exercise: Grasshopper Buzzard, Ruppell's Vulture, Cinereous Vulture, Lappet-faced Vulture, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Steppe Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, and Lanner Falcon. Mr Batbayar suggested the addition of Pallas's Fish Eagle, and Mr Williams, Amur Falcon.

**Action TAG3-13:** CU to write to Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa raising the issue of the need for a joint Action Plan with Namibia on the Black Harrier.

**Action TAG3-14:** TAG to review a proposal to promote the preparation of a Global Species Action Plan for Steppe Eagle to be circulated by the Coordinating Unit following receipt of the anticipated communication from the Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network.

**Action TAG3-15:** Priority species for International Species Action Plans were identified as: Black Harrier, Steppe Eagle, Tawny Eagle (following collection of more data), Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Steller's Sea Eagle.

**Action TAG3-16:** TAG recommended the following 11 species to be used as pilot species for site network analysis by BirdLife International: Grasshopper Buzzard, Ruppell's Vulture, Cinereous Vulture, Lappet-faced Vulture, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Steppe Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Lanner Falcon, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Amur Falcon.

## 4.3 Reporting – Supporting measures and horizon scanning

### 4.3.1 Satellite tags

133. Daniel Hegglin (Vulture Conservation Foundation, VCF) gave a [presentation](#) titled 'The impact of satellite tags – towards best practice' summarizing the results of a project to assess the impact of satellite tags on vultures.
134. Detailed discussion covered technical issues such as tag failure and harness failure, the need for detailed training and guidance for practitioners covering all potential species, and the potential value of a global register of experts. Mr Shobrak said that there had been cases in Saudi Arabia of tagged raptors being shot on this misguided suspicion of involvement in spying activities. The Chair mentioned suspicious failures during Golden Eagle tagging studies in Scotland, probably caused by disposal of tagged birds that had been illegally killed.

135. Mr Williams said that attachment of any tag or ring to a bird represented a risk that could be minimised by appropriate training and guidance. This particularly applied to guidance about new technologies to help researchers identify what information each method can provide and what they can't. This was a recommendation that emerged from TAG2 that had not been implemented.
136. Mr Prommer said that there was already advice available, for example in Hungary and South Africa, covering the use of satellite tags, as well as ethical and financial issues, so that a 'guide to guidance' approach might be appropriate.
137. Mr Virani added that there was a need in Africa for establishing consistent regulations, protocols and guidelines, and the Raptors MOU could play an important role in this process. Mr Shobrak said it would also be useful to compile a list of experts in the Raptors MOU region.
138. Mr Botha emphasised the need for better training and regulation in southern Africa, so that only practitioners with an approved project and a research permit from a recognised institution would be eligible to use satellite tags. He suggested that a sub-group of the TAG could be established to discuss and implement the issues of training, regulation and guidance of satellite tagging.
139. Mr Batbayar pointed out that as GPS tagging became cheaper and catching methods became easier, these issues were becoming problematic in research into other bird taxa such as cranes and wildfowl. He suggested that it might be valuable to develop global guidelines and regulations for the use of satellite tagging in all avian research, not just for raptors. Mr Virani said it would be important to consider the aerodynamic design of transmitters, and recommended including manufacturers in future stakeholder discussions.
140. Mr Kumar said that there was concern in India about the stress experienced by captured birds, and hoped this issue would be included in guidance approved by the TAG. Mr Botha agreed that this was an important issue. The Chair asked Mr Hegglin if he had heard of stress tests, for example through measuring hormones, having been undertaken on captured birds. Mr Hegglin agreed that this might be worth considering. Mr Botha advised caution if this was too much of an invasive process that would itself cause more stress.
141. The Chair noted that there was agreement on the establishment of a sub-group of the TAG to deal with issues relating to the use of satellite tags, including training, guidance, and a register of experts. Mr Botha agreed to chair the group, and the following volunteered to join: Mr Batbayar, Mr Buij, Mr Hegglin, Mr Prommer Mr Shobrak, Mr Virani.
142. Mr Prommer raised the possibility of experienced American and European researchers visiting other countries to help with satellite transmitter work, and asked whether the TAG would support regulating such visits. Mr Virani said that this could be problematic if there was inadequate communication with other researchers in the country.
143. Mr Botha suggested that this was an issue that could be included in the proposed guidelines, together with the need for training of all researchers who were involved in the handling of raptors. He added that the Raptor Research Foundation might be in a position to assist with preparation of a register of raptor researchers.
144. Mr Kumar stressed the need for capacity development in countries such as India, and suggested that this might be an issue that the Raptors MOU could address.
145. Mr Batbayar expressed concern about the practice in some countries, particularly China, of researchers using local bird trappers. This was an issue that should be included in any guidance.

### 4.3.2 Emerging issues

146. The Chair gave a [presentation](#) summarizing emerging issues that were of importance for the Raptors MOU and for the conservation of migratory birds of prey.
147. Mr Virani considered the issue of energy infrastructure, and particularly the development of windfarms, to be one of the greatest emerging threats to raptors in Africa. Kenya was currently undergoing a strategic environmental assessment for wind energy, and he thought the Raptors MOU might have a role. Signatories could use tracking data to identify areas in their national strategies where wind farm development should be discouraged.
148. Mr Buij said that the Dutch government remained unaware of the cumulative mortality effects of windfarms in the Netherlands, and mortality of raptors caused by windfarms on their migrations was another important issue. The Chair observed that the modelling underpinning the locational guidance for windfarms was strong now, but it was a rapidly developing field and many new windfarms were coming online. Mr Virani said that in Kenya, windfarm sites had been allocated 10 years previously, before the dangers were fully understood.
149. Ms Jones agreed with Mr Buij and Mr Virani that the cumulative impact of windfarms was a big issue, and impacts on migratory raptors were particularly important. The BirdLife International Soaring Bird Sensitivity Mapping Tool could help with strategic planning of energy infrastructure including windfarm location. The tool currently covers north and north-east African, southern Europe, Caucasus and the Middle East. While the cumulative impact of windfarms could be considerable in a country such as Egypt, it was also a major issue at flyway level.
150. Mr Virani suggested that it would be worthwhile to develop a planning document including sensitivity maps identifying the suitability of areas for windfarm development. The Chair agreed that this was important, and suggested that it might be cause for regret in years to come if this was not done.
151. Mr Buij agreed that there was a need for more complete sensitivity mapping, which might help with more appropriate siting of windfarms. These issues would benefit from greater publicity, along with mitigating factors such as painting one rotor of wind turbines black.
152. Mr Shobrak stressed the importance of working with the industry and communicating well. Corporate Social Responsibility was increasingly important for industry, and companies were keen to demonstrate their green credentials.
153. Ms Jones said that BirdLife International had started a review of mitigation measures, to which TAG members were invited to contribute.
154. Mr Kumar drew attention to the Wind Energy Research Institute in India. Sites with high wind energy potential were often also sites with many migrant birds. The issue was under the remit of two different ministries, and it would be worthwhile for the Raptors MOU to encourage Signatories to address this issue with dialogue between stakeholders. An immediate requirement was a workshop to sensitise people to the issue.
155. Mr Williams suggested that all the existing mitigation measures were adopting a 'sticking plaster' approach to the problem. He felt conservation organizations should be encouraging massive research and development into new bladeless designs of wind turbines thus properly addressing the root cause of the problem and removing the primary risk to birds and bats.

156. Mr Schneider said that the CMS Energy Task Force (ETF) was an appropriate forum for discussion of the impacts of wind turbines on raptors. Few countries outside Europe and Africa were represented on the ETF and more would be welcomed. Ms Jones explained that the ETF was a technical group which produced tools, guidance and information. There was a need to ensure better engagement of governments with these outputs.
157. Mr Schneider added that the mandate of the ETF included the review of existing mitigation guidelines, identification of gaps and formulation of technical notes and information for the use of government representatives.
158. The Chair, supported by Mr Virani, expressed concern that the interests of the Raptors MOU, for example in windfarm development in Kenya, were not currently being met by the CMS ETF. Mr Schneider pointed out that the Raptors MOU participated in ETF meetings, and that more active participation would be welcomed. The issue of lack of progress with windfarm mitigation in Kenya was partly due to a lack of communication between ministries.
159. Mr Williams raised the issue of the electrocution risk posed to raptors by dangerous power line poles, and recalled the success in mitigating these risks at relatively low cost in Mongolia in 2017, as reported by Mr Batbayar. Similar efforts should be encouraged wherever this was required by poor design of power distribution infrastructure. The Chair closed discussion of energy related issues and asked what other emerging issues were considered by TAG members to be a high priority.
160. Mr Thiollay considered the mass trapping and killing of raptors in the Middle East, which was a very significant threat for several species, to be an issue that deserved more attention from the Raptors MOU.
161. Mr Zadegan said that airstrikes were a continuing hazard for raptors. The Chair said that recent work on conflict resolution might be of interest to the Raptors MOU. Involvement of social scientists had been found to be highly beneficial in resolving conflicts. Ms Jones agreed that multidisciplinary approaches were of growing importance, and that the Raptors MOU seemed likely to benefit from the expertise of social scientists.
162. Mr Williams recalled that this had been discussed at TAG2, and asked for advice on the best way forward. There were now good examples of human/raptor conflicts that had been solved with the assistance of social science. Perhaps the best was the recent resolution of the issue of Amur Falcon trapping in Nagaland. Mr Kumar said that the Amur Falcon had been proposed as the state bird of Nagaland, and that this story was an excellent example of turning a negative into a positive.
163. Mr Virani mentioned a publication by Stephen Redpath<sup>1</sup>, and the Chair said he would contact him for advice on best approaches to conflicts encountered by the Raptors MOU.
164. The Chair introduced the emerging issue of wildlife disease as it related to raptors. In the Western Isles of Scotland, a quarter of Golden Eagle chicks died in the first four weeks, probably because of the increasingly wet climate promoting bacterial disease. A second issue was the panoply of veterinary drugs.

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<sup>1</sup> Conflicts in Conservation: Navigating Towards Solutions, ed. S. M. Redpath, R. J. Gutierrez, K. A. Wood and J. C. Young. Published by Cambridge University Press. © British Ecological Society 2015  
(PDF) *An introduction to conservation conflicts*. Available from:  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276289119\\_An\\_introduction\\_to\\_conservation\\_conflicts](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/276289119_An_introduction_to_conservation_conflicts)

165. Mr Schneider said that the CMS Wildlife Diseases Task Force (WDTF) under the Working Group on Animal Health was inactive due to lack of capacity, but the Avian Influenza Task Force was active during outbreaks, the last of which had been in 2016.
166. Ms Jones recalled the issue of proposed diclofenac licensing in Europe (in Spain and Italy), and that Borja Heredia had written requesting a meeting with the relevant directorate in Europe. There was a need to follow up on this request. The Chair requested Tilman Schneider, on behalf of the CMS Secretariat, to write to the European Commission.
167. Mr Prommer said that West Nile Virus had been present in Hungary for more than 10 years and was having a suspected impact on the Northern Goshawk population. This was also a potential human health issue.
168. Mr Batbayar pointed out that the diseases of raptors were not well known, and said that actions should not just concentrate on infectious diseases, but should include parasites, particularly worms. Raptor mortality related to parasites remained poorly understood.
169. The Chair concluded that the TAG should stand ready to engage with the WDTF should it be reactivated.
170. The Chair raised the issue of engaging with young people and ensuring a better gender balance in the activities of the Raptors MOU. There was a real danger of engaging with an increasingly small, old and male group of specialists. He noted that environmental social media had some stars who were passionate about raptors who had a real impact on young people. Mr Prommer suggested that short publicity videos about what the Raptors MOU does could raise awareness.
171. Mr Shobrak noted that young people were increasingly involved in waterbird counting and bird photography in Saudi Arabia, where a World Migratory Bird Day (WMBD) focusing on raptors was also well received. The Egyptian Department of Environment had won the AEWA Conservation Award at the previous week's MOP, and such prizes could be encouraging. Mr Batbayar agreed that WMBD was an effective awareness raising opportunity. It was popular among young people in Mongolia, where university students were involved in many of the activities.
172. Ms Jones said that Denmark was a good example of a country where specific events targeted women and families. Each TAG member was in a position to attract the younger generation, for example by visiting schools and giving talks.
173. The Chair requested that all the TAG members should record a one minute clip on why they study raptors. These would then be posted on the Raptors MOU site. All agreed to do this, and Ms Jones suggested that TAG members should encourage their female and young colleagues in particular to provide additional clips.
174. Mr Williams said that a number of TAG members would retire at MOS3, and asked all TAG members to think of suitable young and/or female replacement candidates. He also suggested that the Coordinating Unit should encourage Signatories to consider age and gender when making nominations at MOS3.
175. The Chair introduced the final emerging issue, the potential CITES Annex I listing for vultures. Ms Jones gave a [presentation](#) titled 'Notes on potential CITES Annex I listing for Vultures', and the TAG offered feedback on the benefits and risks of listing Old World vultures on CITES Appendix I.
176. Mr Botha noted that CITES listing could cause difficulty when moving forensic samples between countries for analysis. Not a lot of samples were being exported, but delays could ruin analyses. Mr Virani added that the listing might raise barriers to research where parts and birds move across borders.



177. Mr Hegglin said the VCF membership were considering this listing. It had requested feedback from members but had not yet adopted a position.
178. Mr Buij observed that the effects of trade on vultures were poorly known, but he was not convinced that the listing would achieve much. There was no enforcement of trade controls between African countries, and export of live birds to Europe was a known issue.
179. Mr Williams considered TRAFFIC to be a successful and progressive organization, and suggested tasking them with an assessment of the benefits and risks of the listing as a way forward. The need for an independent study identified in the Vulture MsAP might encourage a Signatory to drive this forward.

**Action TAG3-17:** TAG to create guidance on satellite tagging raptors, Andre Botha as the lead.

**Action TAG3-18:** Des Thompson to contact Professor Steve Redpath regarding best approaches to conflict resolution.

**Action TAG3-19:** Tilman Schneider, on behalf of the CMS Secretariat, to follow up on the letter that CMS Secretariat sent to the European Commission regarding diclofenac.

**Action TAG3-20:** Coordinating Unit to create, with the help of TAG, and post a web story on volunteering related to raptor conservation/TAG members' motivation to study raptors.

**Action TAG3-21:** Coordinating Unit to encourage Signatories to submit female nominations of future TAG members in advance of Raptors MOS3.

**Action TAG3-22:** All TAG members agreed to record a one minute video clip outlining why they are interested in birds of prey, and to submit these to the Coordinating Unit ASAP.

#### 4.3.3 Role of TAG in proposing amendments to the Raptors MOU and its annexes

180. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) based on [TAG3/Doc.4.3b](#) 'The role of TAG in proposing amendments to the Raptors MOU and its annexes'. Ms Jones suggested that there should be a form on the Raptors MOU website that Signatories could use to make proposals for amendments. She agreed to draft such a form.
181. The Chair proposed that a good way for the TAG to express its opinion on proposals from Signatories would be to do so in writing, possibly after a teleconference if that was deemed necessary. In the event of a negative response from the TAG, the proponent could be given the opportunity to withdraw its proposal.
182. TAG agreed that this was an appropriate mechanism for implementing its role.

**Action TAG3-23:** Coordinating Unit to commission BirdLife International to draft guidance/standard form that could be used by Signatories to propose amendments to the species list of the Raptors MOU (Annex 1).

## 5. List of important sites for migratory raptors

(This item was covered under item 4.1.)

## 6. Review of the Action Plan of the MOU

### 6.1 Update on Progress

183. Mr Pritchard gave a [presentation](#) titled 'Review of the Action Plan to the Raptors MOU (6.1)' based on [TAG3/Doc.6.1](#) 'Review of the Action Plan to the Raptors MOU – update on progress'. The presentation showed the scope and purpose of his review of the Action Plan, the information to be used as the basis of the review, and introduced a concise questionnaire for National Contact Points (NCP), adapted from the questionnaire drafted and used in 2015.
184. Ms Jones suggested that it would be more straightforward for recipients to respond to the questionnaire if any previous reports or questionnaires sent from the country were included as examples when the current questionnaire was distributed. Ms Herzog replied that as the Swiss NCP, this would be greatly appreciated.
185. Mr Pritchard considered it important to draft the questionnaire in such a way that responders would be able to draw attention to changes since the earlier questionnaire, circulated in 2015, to give an idea of progress and discourage recycling of earlier responses.
186. The Chair asked for a suggested deadline for distributing the questionnaire to NCPs, considering the duration of Mr Pritchard's contract, the need for the TAG to approve the questionnaire, and the forthcoming holiday season. After discussion, it was agreed that the questionnaire should be approved by the TAG and distributed before mid-February 2019.
187. Ms Jones suggested that it would ease the task of responding to the questionnaire, and so maximize the number and accuracy of responses, if it was presented in a format with statements to which respondents replied through the use of tick boxes. A more refined approach would be to present multiple statements in the questionnaire, to which respondents could add scores.
188. Mr Pritchard agreed that this was good practice, but this approach would reduce the possibility of comparison with the earlier survey, and would not be feasible under the current contract. He agreed, however, that these approaches should be considered as a way forward for future surveys.

### 6.2 National reporting

189. Mr Pritchard gave a [presentation](#) summarizing the plans for developing a standard reporting format for (i) the regular progress reports by Signatories on implementing the national or regional strategies anticipated under Paragraph 15 of the MOU, and (ii) to enable the Coordinating Unit to prepare the overview of progress in implementation of the Action Plan before each MOS, as provided in Paragraphs 16 and 17 of the MOU.
190. The Chair stressed the importance of links to the targets in the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (SPMS) 2015 – 2023, approved by CMS COP11. He felt great strides had been made for raptors in this regard than for other taxa covered by CMS. Mr Williams recalled that document [MOS2/11](#) 'How Implementation of the Action Plan of the Raptors MOU Contributes towards Delivery of the CMS Strategic Plan for Migratory Species' had been prepared in 2015 for the Raptors MOU MOS2.
191. Mr Pritchard agreed that implementation of the Raptors MOU was addressing the SPMS targets. He pointed out that the targets in the SPMS were generic, relating to all migratory species, and it was still not clear how best to make connections between reporting for CMS and for its daughter instruments. If starting from scratch and wanting national reporting for the Raptors MOU to contribute to the SPMS targets, the national report for the MOU would be a component of what

was reported by a country to CMS. He thought it might be tactically advantageous to be the first of the CMS family instruments to organize its reporting in this way.

192. The Chair drew attention to the CBD 2011 – 2020 Aichi Targets which would gain prominence in 2019, their final year of operation.
193. Ms Jones pointed out parallels with AEWA, where there had been discussion at the MOP the previous week about how AEWA could contribute to the CBD post-2020 biodiversity framework. She added that it would be important for national reporting under different instruments to minimize the burden on governments and maximize synergies with other reporting processes.
194. Mr Pritchard suggested that if national reporting for raptors was radically re-organized, in line with the CMS SPMS, it would reduce the reporting burden on Signatories, but it would probably also miss the targets of the Raptors MOU which required more detailed information. Mr Williams said that harmonizing reporting with the CMS SPMS would be complicated by its expiry in 2023, after which the format and targets for reporting were likely to change.
195. Mr Botha hoped that the content of national reporting under the Raptors MOU would include information about how much was contributed by governments towards implementation, and how much was contributed by other organizations. This would allow assessment of the commitment of each government.

## 7. Raptor Conservation Strategies

196. Mr Williams gave a [presentation](#) titled 'Raptor Conservation Strategies' which included an update on the status, plans and potential support that TAG could give to Signatories in preparing their national strategies.
197. Mr Deacon said that having a professional facilitator had greatly assisted the process of initiating a National MsAP for Vultures in Zimbabwe, but the process had since lost momentum.
198. Mr Prommer explained that in Central and Eastern Europe, the Raptors MOU was a low priority in ministries, which lacked knowledge and were reluctant to ask NGOs for assistance. On the other hand, some countries were already working to conserve raptors and considered that they were doing enough.
199. Mr Salim Javed (United Arab Emirates) suggested that the Swiss strategy might be suitable for use as a model for other countries to follow, and that it might be appropriate for some countries to combine efforts into regional strategies.
200. Mr Williams replied that the principle of sharing strategies was enshrined in the MOU, and that strategic planning workshops could be regional as well as national. The regional strategy in the EU was driven by all 28 countries operating under shared legislation, the Birds Directive, but states such as the Czech Republic were additionally developing their own national strategies.
201. Ms Jones stressed the need for guidance on practical tools to help address threats to be easily accessible, for guidance on developing national strategies to potentially link to or include information on e.g. the ETF/ETF guidance, the preventing poisoning working group/guidance MIKT etc. and for governments to include plans for engagement in these available task forces/use of guidance as part of their responses to these threats in their national strategies.

202. Mr Schneider said that when preparing their national strategies, signatories should look into their obligations under existing CMS resolutions, and should link their strategies to National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) under CBD. Mr Williams added that the guidance provided in Kovács & Williams (2012)<sup>2</sup> required updating to include Resolutions adopted by CMS COP11 in 2014 and COP12 in 2017.
203. Mr Pritchard stressed the value of mechanisms for mutual assistance between countries, and suggested that at the Raptors MOU MOS3, Switzerland, the EU, and possibly the Czech Republic, could lead a special session to share their experiences in preparing and implementing raptor conservation strategies at national and regional levels.
204. The Chair concluded the discussion by suggesting that it would be valuable to prepare a short document with raptor conservation success stories, as a source of inspiration to those preparing conservation strategies.

### 7.1 The Swiss approach to raptor conservation

205. Ms Herzog (FOEN) gave a [presentation](#) titled ‘Raptor Conservation – The Swiss approach.’ introducing the approach adopted to conserve birds of prey in Switzerland. Mr Schnidrig underlined the importance of careful use of language. The term ‘strategy’ had been considered too strong in Switzerland, suggesting equal importance with, for example, the national energy strategy, or biodiversity strategy. Instead, they had used the term ‘Strategic guidelines and management priorities’ for raptors, and the priority activities were designed to align with the existing biodiversity strategy.
206. Mr Schnidrig stressed the need to avoid coming up with wish lists in national strategies, which should concentrate on matters such as organizations responsible for different activities, and methods of implementation. The process also needed to include national responses to international obligations, and provisions for reviewing progress with each of the goals.
207. Mr Williams congratulated FOEN on the quality of their strategy, while agreeing that the word ‘strategy’ was not always appropriate. He said that the journey undertaken by Switzerland to prepare the first national strategy under the Raptors MOU had paved the way for preparation and implementation of raptor conservation strategies by all Signatories. MOS3 would provide an opportunity to inspire the other Signatories and share lessons learned, and he reiterated the invitation of the Chair for Switzerland to present their strategy at MOS3.
208. Mr Javed congratulated FOEN on their strategy, and expressed a wish for it to be made available to other Signatories before MOS3. Ms Herzog confirmed that the Swiss strategy would indeed be made available for other Signatories in 2019, after it had been circulated for comment among stakeholders in Switzerland.
209. Mr Batbayar said that a national raptor strategy for Mongolia faced a challenge because of a lack of data and information upon which to base the strategy. This made it difficult to identify actions. Ms Herzog replied that this had not been much a problem when preparing the Swiss strategy, but the draft strategy did include a chapter on research needs, which had been identified by the Swiss Ornithological Institute (SOI).

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<sup>2</sup> Kovács, A. & N.P. Williams (2012) [Guidelines](#) for Preparing National or Regional Raptor Conservation and Management Strategies. CMS Technical Series. Abu-Dhabi, UAE.

210. A discussion between Mr Thiollay, Mr Ayé and Mr Schnidrig outlined the roles of governmental and other scientific and conservation organizations in the preparation of raptor conservation strategies. Nature conservation was a low priority for many governments, and NGOs could play an important role in catalyzing government activity. Sending documents to government personnel was far more effective if they were actively engaged and included in processes. Once governments were involved, implementation was more likely.
211. Mr Botha said that the sheer scale of effort required was a cause of reluctance for governments considering raptor conservation strategies. In South Africa, where there were 84 species of birds of prey, plans focused on vultures, and conservation measures for vultures benefitted other species as well.
212. Mr Ayé pointed out that strategies need to find a balance between being ambitious and realistic through careful prioritization.
213. Mr Virani stressed the low capacity in many Range States, and the need to develop the next generation of conservation leaders. In Kenya, the government and wildlife authorities were overwhelmed by the issue of poaching, for example of Rhinos, leaving little capacity for other issues.

**Action TAG3-24:** Coordinating Unit to update guidance on preparing national or regional raptor conservation and management strategies to include reference to Resolutions adopted by CMS at COP11 in 2014 and COP12 in 2017).

**Action TAG3-25:** Coordinating Unit to invite Switzerland, the EU (and the Czech Republic if the anticipated National Strategy is submitted) to present at MOS3, to share their experiences of preparing and implementing raptor conservation strategies.

**Action TAG3-26:** Coordinating Unit to circulate the Swiss Raptor Conservation Guidelines (once submitted) and prepare a short, appealing web story as publicity to inspire Signatories to prepare their raptor conservation strategies.

## 8. Any other Business

214. Mr Buij gave a [presentation](#) on the Vulture Initiative for Sub-Saharan Africa (VISA). The key message was *‘Unless we share our achievements and highlight our current goals, we won’t be as effective at delivering vulture conservation...’*.

## 9. Adoption of the List of Actions

215. The list of Actions adopted by the TAG are presented as Annex 1.

## 10. Closure of the meeting

216. The Chair thanked all participants for an extremely lively and productive meeting. He particularly thanked the hosts for their generosity and hospitality, and the Coordinating Unit of the MOU for its excellent stewardship. Jenny Renell was leaving after nine years and would be sorely missed.



217. Mr Williams reiterated the Chair's thanks, especially to the hosts, and also thanked the Chairs of the meeting, particularly Mr Botha who had stepped in at short notice on the first day. He also reiterated his personal thanks to Jenny Renell for her consistently outstanding performance in supporting the Coordinating Unit from its formation in 2009.
218. Mr Schnidrig thanked the TAG for choosing to hold the meeting in Switzerland, and Mr Schmid said it had been a pleasure for SOI to provide the venue for the meeting.
219. The Chair closed the meeting at 16:00 hours on Friday, 14 December 2018.

## Annex 1: TAG3 Actions

**Action TAG3-1:** Coordinating Unit to check with the CMS Secretariat IT team the amount of traffic on the Raptors MOU website.

**Action TAG3-2:** TAG to provide feedback to the Coordinating Unit before the end of 2018 on the five key tasks for 2018 - 2020 identified in the SakerGAP draft Implementation Plan.

**Action TAG3-3:** Coordinating Unit to consider providing letters of support, on request, to organizations and individuals approaching governments to implement the Vulture MsAP.

**Action TAG3-4:** Coordinating Unit to share briefing with TAG on the EV New LIFE Project.

**Action TAG3-5:** TAG to consider if there was a need to address the definition of the concept of Vulture Safe Zones after the publication of the paper by BirdLife International.

**Action TAG3-6:** TAG should continue with efforts to provide accessible, digestible guidance ("Guides to Guidance") on measures to address various key threats to migratory raptors. Mr Botha to raise this at meeting of IUCN SSC Specialist Group chairs in October 2019.

**Action TAG3-7:** Ralph Buij and Munir Virani to prepare a proposal about tagging Tawny Eagles, to follow their behaviour as indicators of poisoning, and to circulate to TAG members for comment after this meeting.

**Action TAG3-8:** On behalf of TAG, the Coordinating Unit will propose to Signatories at MOS3 that they consider adding the Order Accipitriformes to the MOU text and its Annexes.

**Action TAG3-9:** On behalf of TAG, the Coordinating Unit will propose to Signatories at MoS3 that they consider adding Northern Boobook to replace Brown Boobook in Annex I of the MOU.

**Action TAG3-10:** Coordinating Unit to write to Israel advising that, based on current information, TAG felt unable to support a proposal to list Bonelli's Eagle on Annex 1 to the Raptors MOU but that further evidence showing its migratory behavior of wild birds would be welcome.

**Action TAG3-11:** Coordinating Unit to invite Switzerland to prepare a paper for MOS3 on their national approach to raptor conservation, including the way in which key sites of international importance for migratory raptors had been identified.

**Action TAG3-12:** Coordinating Unit to re-contract BirdLife International to include consideration of enlargement of the geographic scope of the Raptors MoU, before assessing the interest of the Signatories States and approaching the prospective additional Range States.

**Action TAG3-13:** CU to write to Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa raising the issue of the need for a joint Action Plan with Namibia on the Black Harrier.

**Action TAG3-14:** TAG agreed to review a proposal to promote the preparation of a Global Species Action Plan for Steppe Eagle to be circulated by the Coordinating Unit following receipt of the anticipated communication from the Russian Raptor Research and Conservation Network.

**Action TAG3-15:** Priority species for International Species Action Plans were identified as: Black Harrier, Steppe Eagle, Tawny Eagle (following collection of more data), Beaudouin's Snake Eagle, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Steller's Sea Eagle.

**Action TAG3-16:** TAG recommended the following 11 species to be used as pilot species for site network analysis by BirdLife International: Grasshopper Buzzard, Ruppell's Vulture, Cinereous Vulture, Lappet-faced Vulture, Mountain Hawk Eagle, Steppe Eagle, Wahlberg's Eagle, Egyptian Vulture, Lanner Falcon, Pallas's Fish Eagle and Amur Falcon.

**Action TAG3-17:** TAG to create guidance on satellite tagging raptors, Andre Botha as the lead.

**Action TAG3-18:** Des Thompson to contact Professor Steve Redpath regarding best approaches to conflict resolution.

**Action TAG3-19:** Tilman Schneider, on behalf of the CMS Secretariat, to follow up on the letter that CMS Secretariat sent to the European Commission regarding diclofenac.

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**Action TAG3-22:** All TAG members agreed to record a one-minute video clip outlining why they are interested in birds of prey, and to submit these to the Coordinating Unit as soon as possible.

**Action TAG3-23:** Coordinating Unit to commission BirdLife International to draft guidance/standard form that could be used by Signatories to propose amendments to the species list of the Raptors MOU (Annex 1).

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**Action TAG3-26:** Coordinating Unit to circulate the Swiss Raptor Conservation Guidelines (once submitted) and prepare a short, appealing web story as publicity to inspire Signatories to prepare their raptor conservation strategies.

## **Annex 2: Agenda of the 3rd Meeting of the Technical Advisory Group to the Raptors MOU**

### **1. Welcome and introductions**

### **2. Adoption of the Agenda**

### **3. Update since the Second Meeting of TAG**

- 3.1. Review of Actions from the Second Meeting of TAG
- 3.2. Report from the Coordinating Unit
- 3.3. Report on implementation of the Saker GAP
- 3.4. Report on implementation of the Vulture MsAP
- 3.5. Report from the CMS Secretariat

### **4. Review of the TAG Work plan 2016 – 2020**

- 4.1. MOU – amendments to species list, site list, geographical scope
- 4.2. Threat assessment
- 4.3. Reporting – supporting measures and horizon scanning

### **5. List of important sites for migratory birds of prey**

### **6. Review of the Action Plan to the Raptors MOU**

- 6.1. Update on progress
- 6.2. National reporting

### **7. Raptor Conservation Strategies**

### **8. Any other business**

### **9. Adoption of the List of Actions**

### **10. Closure of the meeting**

## Annex 3: List of Participants

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