





## FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE SAKER FALCON TASK FORCE (STF15)

(Online, 8 September 2025)

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### A PROPOSED CMS DECISION-MAKING STRUCTURE FOR THE CONSERVATION AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT OF THE SAKER FALCON

STF14 UNEP/CMS/STF14/Doc.3	STF15 UNEP/CMS/STF15/Doc.2/Rev1
<p><b>1. Background</b></p> <p>CMS Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) urges Parties, Range States, and stakeholders to actively support the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF). The Resolution instructs the STF to actively promote the implementation of the Saker Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) and coordinate its review. It instructs the STF also to further develop, refine, and implement, where legally possible, and following best practice, an adaptive management and monitoring framework to improve the present conservation status of the Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> and to promote monitoring and research whilst minimizing the impacts of illegal taking and use, energy infrastructure and other key threats on birds. See Annex 1 for details of a legal opinion providing context for the work of the STF. The Saker Falcon Task Force is now nearing the completion of the development of an innovative Adaptive Management Framework concept. The current membership of the STF is listed in Annex 2 for information.</p>	<p><b>Background</b></p> <p>CMS Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) urges Parties, Range States, and stakeholders to actively support the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force (STF). The Resolution instructs the STF to actively promote the implementation of the Saker Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) and coordinate its review. It instructs the STF also to further develop, refine, and implement, where legally possible, and following best practice, an adaptive management and monitoring framework to improve the present conservation status of the Saker Falcon (<i>Falco cherrug</i>) and to promote monitoring and research whilst minimizing the impacts of illegal taking and use, energy infrastructure and other key threats on birds. See Annex 1 for details of a legal opinion providing context for the work of the STF. The Saker Falcon Task Force is now nearing the completion of the development of an innovative Adaptive Management Framework concept. The current membership of the STF is listed in Annex 2 for information.</p>
<p>The following outlines the governance structure and modus operandi required to implement a system of adaptive management for the Saker Falcon. <b>The system</b> proposes a decision-making framework at the global level</p>	<p>The following outlines the governance structure and modus operandi required to implement a system of adaptive management for the Saker Falcon. <b>This document</b> proposes a decision-making framework at the global</p>

Legend	Revisions
	<i>Rewritten</i>
	<i>Additions</i>
	<i>Deletion</i>
	<i>No change</i>

<p>in order to provide an overview and direction for the conservation and management actions required. This approach is designed to be <b>cost-effective, inclusive and to use the best available science</b> to inform decisions.</p>	<p>level in order to provide an overview and direction for the conservation and management actions required. This approach is designed to be <b>inclusive and to use and develop the best available science, fed into best practice population and scenario modelling</b> to inform decisions.</p>
<p>Note that at the national level, <b>decisions are made by</b> national governments' Management and Scientific Authorities, or if different, national wildlife conservation authorities. <b>They decide on implementation and translate</b> such international frameworks into national laws, policies, and regulations and thus would be responsible for the national implementation of the Saker Falcon AMF.</p>	<p>Note that at the national level, <b>quotes would be proposed by</b> national governments' Management and Scientific Authorities, or if different, national wildlife conservation authorities. <b>National Governments are responsible for translating</b> such international frameworks into national laws, policies, and regulations and thus would be responsible for the national implementation of the Saker Falcon AMF. <b>Appropriate levels of take that the population can support would be determined by the STF through international population and information and scenario modelling fed by the best available data on key parameters for each affected population.</b></p>
<p><b>2. Existing key structures – at the international level.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The CMS Conference of the Parties (CMS COP)</b> provides the overall <b>decision-making forum</b> for the work <b>on the Saker Falcon</b> through adopting Resolutions and <b>decisions to provide strategic direction for the work of the Task Force.</b> The decision on listing the Saker Falcon on Appendix I or II and the application of sustainable use of the species is made by the CMS Conference of Parties (CMS <b>CoP</b>). The CMS <b>CoP</b> also approves the overall guidelines for sustainable use, and international population management strategies.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Existing key structures – at the international level.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The CMS Conference of the Parties (CMS COP)</b> provides the overall <b>strategic direction</b> for the work of <b>CMS including the Saker Falcon Task Force</b> through adopting Resolutions and <b>Decisions.</b> The decision on listing the Saker Falcon on Appendix I or II and the application of sustainable use of the species is made by the CMS Conference of Parties (CMS <b>COP</b>). The CMS <b>COP</b> also approves the overall guidelines for sustainable use, and international population management strategies.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CMS Scientific Council</b> makes recommendations to the COP on such issues as research on migratory species, specific conservation and management measures in relation to threats to migratory species, the inclusion of migratory species in the Appendices.</li> </ul>

<p>• <b>The Saker Falcon Task Force (STF)</b> derives authority directly from the CMS <b>CoP</b> through Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14). The STF takes forward the implementation of the Resolution, reporting on progress to forthcoming CMS <b>CoP15</b>, scheduled for early 2026. It reports also to Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptor MoU and to the CMS Scientific Council. These latter two bodies provide valuable sounding boards on some of the key issues involved.</p>	<p>• <b>The Saker Falcon Task Force (STF)</b> derives authority directly from the CMS <b>COP</b> through Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14). The STF takes forward the implementation of the Resolution, reporting on progress to forthcoming CMS <b>COP15</b>, scheduled for early 2026. It reports also to Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptor MoU and to the CMS Scientific Council. These latter two bodies provide valuable sounding boards on some of the key issues involved.</p>
<p>• <b>The Raptor MoU, Technical Advisory Group and the Coordinating Unit.</b> Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptor MoU and the related Technical Advisory Group (TAG) provide important guidance for the work of the STF. The Coordinating Unit facilitates the work of the STF, ensuring the delivery and cost- effectiveness of the work.</p>	<p>• <b>The Raptor MOU, Technical Advisory Group and the Coordinating Unit.</b> Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptor MOU and the related Technical Advisory Group (TAG) provide important guidance for the work of the STF. The Coordinating Unit facilitates the work of the STF, ensuring the delivery and cost-effectiveness of the work.</p>
<p><b>3. Proposed governance modus operandi</b></p> <p>It is proposed that the STF, acting under renewed mandate to be considered at CMS <b>CoP 15</b> <b>scheduled for early 2026</b>, continues to implement Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) and uses the following approach to decide on <b>periodic quotas of Saker Falcons that can be taken from the wild, where legally possible, and on the conservation measures</b> that must be in place to ensure that any quota is sustainable and does not cause any detriment to existing wild populations across the full range of the species. The STF will continue to report to subsequent CMS <b>CoPs</b> on the effectiveness of this approach.</p>	<p><b>Proposed governance and modus operandi</b></p> <p>It is proposed that the STF, acting under renewed mandate to be considered at CMS <b>COP 15</b>, continues to implement Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) and uses the following approach to decide on <b>the level of any take of Saker Falcons from the wild.</b> This will be implemented only where legally possible, to be <b>proposed to COP.</b> Any take should be in line with the <b>recovery objective of the SakerGAP, and the legal, ecological, conservation and social safeguards</b> that must be in place to ensure that any quota is sustainable and does not cause any detriment to existing wild populations across the full range of the species. The STF will continue to report to subsequent CMS <b>COPs</b> on the effectiveness of this approach.</p>
<p>The membership of the STF shall be:</p> <p>Chair and Vice Chair – as elected at the 1st Meeting. STF Secretariat – to be provided by CU of the Raptors MOU</p>	<p>The membership of the STF shall be:</p> <p>Chair and Vice Chair – as elected at the 1st Meeting. STF Secretariat – to be provided by CU of the Raptors MOU</p>

<p>2 CMS Scientific Councillors – including the Chair of the Scientific Council                  3 – 4 representatives from Central and East Asia (core breeding areas)                  2 representatives from Europe and Eastern Europe (breeding areas)                  2-3 representatives from the Middle East (migration/wintering areas and falconry)                  1-2 representatives from North and East Africa (wintering areas)                  2-3 representatives from NGO partners                  1 independent Specialist Technical Advisor (ornithologist)                  1 representative from CMS Secretariat                  1 representative from CITES Secretariat</p>	<p>2 CMS Scientific Councillors – including the Chair of the Scientific Council                  3 – 4 representatives from Central and East Asia (core breeding areas)                  2 representatives from Europe and Eastern Europe (breeding areas)                  2-3 representatives from the Middle East (migration/wintering areas and falconry)                  1-2 representatives from North and East Africa (wintering areas)                  2-3 representatives from NGO partners                  1 independent Specialist Technical Advisor (ornithologist)                  1 representative from CMS Secretariat                  1 representative from CITES Secretariat</p>
<p>The STF will meet every year to review progress in the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan and its Annual work plan.</p>	<p>The STF will meet every year to review progress in the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global Action Plan and its Annual work plan. Meetings of the STF should be held in person, if resources allow, otherwise they should be held online.</p>
<p>The STF will meet at least every three years to propose any quota for the coming triennium (three-year period following each CMS CoP) and will indicate also at each of these meetings an indicative level of quota for the subsequent two triennia (giving a projection of nine years in total) to provide a medium-term indication based on known science at that time. This forward-look will be revised each time the STF meets to consider quotas.</p>	<p>The STF will meet one year ahead of CMS COP to review the results of national populations monitoring, national reports on taking of Sakers and the outputs of the latest population/scenario modelling made by an independent research group or researchers, and make recommendations for the preliminary maximum level of take supported by the latest available data. The recommended maximum level of take and all opinions expressed in the discussions shall be shared with CMS Scientific Council and Raptors MOU TAG for advice to COP and then presented at COP as part of the STF reporting.</p>
	<p>Thereafter, following best practice, they will meet annually to review any new population and taking data, re-assess the modelling and review the recommended maximum level of take. The Raptor MOU should be informed of the outcome of the deliberations of the STF.</p>
<p>Ideally decisions on the level of any quota at the international level should be reached by consensus, however, if voting is required then each member of the STF would have one vote and the Chair would have an additional casting vote in the event of a tie. All opinions expressed in relation to the level</p>	<p>Any decisions on the recommended level of any quota at the international level should, where possible, be reached by consensus. If voting is required to arrive at the STF recommendation, then each member of the STF would have one vote and the Chair would have an additional casting vote in the event of</p>

<p>of any quota should be reported to the subsequent CMS CoP for information.</p>	<p>a tie. Decisions on national quotas should be made through a three-level (international, national and local) engagement of stakeholders.</p>
<p>Meetings of the STF should take place between CMS COPs so that the proposed quota levels can be considered and endorsed at each subsequent COP. Meetings of the STF should be held in person, if resources allow, otherwise they should be held online. The result of the discussions by the STF should be routed via the CMS Scientific Council for their views and then submitted to the CMS COP for consideration. The Raptor MOU should be informed of the outcome of the deliberations of the STF.</p>	
<p>The STF should establish an independent scientific process to undertake a prioritized assessment of the numbers and trend of saker falcon populations in each region of the world so that the full life cycle (breeding, migration and wintering) of the species is periodically reviewed. Such an independent assessment should be used to inform the decision on any quota and any significant data or information gaps should be assessed by the STF when making any decision.</p>	<p>The STF should establish an independent scientific process to undertake a prioritized assessment of the numbers and trend of Saker Falcon populations in each region of the world so that the full life cycle (breeding, migration and wintering) of the species is periodically reviewed. Such an independent assessment should feed into population modelling being used to inform the decision on any quota and any significant data or information gaps should be assessed by the STF when making any decision applying precautionary principles.</p>
<p>Revision of the Terms of Reference for the STF is now required. This should in particular, include the new role in taking forward the operation of the adaptive management approach outlined here, along with the need to implement conservation action and to limit illegal activities. A proposed revised Terms of Reference for the STF is at Annex 3.</p>	<p>Revision of the Terms of Reference for the STF is now required. This should in particular, include the new role in taking forward the operation of the adaptive management approach outlined here, along with the need to meet pre-defined sustainability safeguards, implement conservation action and to mitigate the impact of illegal activities on Saker Falcon populations. A proposed revised Terms of Reference for the STF is at Annex 3.</p>
<p><b>4. Decision 14.160 Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) Global Action Plan</b></p> <p>The decision calls the Secretariat, subject to the availability of external resources: to organize regional workshops of the Saker Falcon Task Force within the triennium 2024-2026 in the breeding range, to promote the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global</p>	<p><b>Decision 14.160 Saker Falcon (Falco cherrug) Global Action Plan</b></p> <p>The decision calls the Secretariat, subject to the availability of external resources: to organize regional workshops of the Saker Falcon Task Force within the triennium 2024-2026 in the breeding range, to promote the implementation of the Saker Falcon Global</p>

<p>Action Plan (SakerGAP) and to review and update the SakerGAP as the document timeline has passed.</p> <p>Revising SakerGAP will require the organization of regional workshops and consultancy services for a total of 90.000 USD.</p>	<p>Action Plan (SakerGAP) and to review and update the SakerGAP as the document timeline has passed.</p> <p>Revising SakerGAP will require the organization of regional workshops and consultancy services for a total of 90.000 USD.</p>
<p><b>Annex 1.</b></p> <p>Legal context for the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force.</p>	<p><b>Annex 1.</b></p> <p>Legal context for the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force.</p>
<p><b>Annex 2.</b></p> <p>Present membership and role of the Saker Falcon Task Force.</p> <p>The STF has prepared detailed Saker Falcon AMF guidelines. The STF currently includes the representatives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, CMS Parties and Range States, conservation, falconry and research organizations and independent technical and scientific experts.</p>	<p><b>Annex 2.</b></p> <p>Present membership and role of the Saker Falcon Task Force.</p> <p>The STF has prepared detailed Saker Falcon AMF guidelines. The STF currently includes the representatives of Multilateral Environmental Agreements, CMS Parties and Range States, conservation, falconry and research organizations and independent technical and scientific experts.</p>
<p><b>Annex 3.</b></p> <p>Proposed revised Terms of Reference for the STF.</p>	<p><b>Annex 3.</b></p> <p>Proposed revised Terms of Reference for the STF.</p>