

FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE SAKER FALCON TASK FORCE (STF15)

(Online, 8 September 2025)

UNEP/CMS/STF15/ Outcome1

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

Background

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 (*Falco cherrug*) 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.

The following outlines the governance structure and modus operandi required to implement a system of adaptive management for the Saker Falcon. This document proposes a decision-making framework at the global level in order to provide an overview and direction for the conservation and management actions required. This approach is designed to be inclusive and to use and develop the best available science, fed into best practice population and scenario modelling to inform decisions.

Note that at the national level, quotas would be proposed by national governments' Management and Scientific Authorities, or if different, national wildlife conservation authorities. National Governments are responsible for translating such international frameworks into national laws, policies, and regulations and thus would be responsible for the national implementation of the Saker Falcon AMF. Appropriate levels of take that the population can support would be determined by the STF through international population and information and scenario modelling based on the best available data on key parameters for each affected population.

Existing key structures – at the international level.

- **The CMS Conference of the Parties (CMS COP)** provides the overall strategic direction for the work of CMS including the Saker Falcon Task Force through adopting Resolutions and Decisions. 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 COP). The CMS COP also approves the overall guidelines for sustainable use, and international population management strategies.
- **CMS Scientific Council** advise 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.

- **The Saker Falcon Task Force (STF)** derives authority directly from the CMS COP through Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14). The STF takes forward the implementation of the Resolution, reporting on progress to forthcoming CMS COP15, scheduled for early 2026. It reports also to Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptors MoU and to the CMS Scientific Council. These latter two bodies provide valuable sounding boards on some of the key issues involved.
- **The Raptors MOU, Technical Advisory Group and the Coordinating Unit.** Meetings of the Signatories to the Raptors 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.

Proposed governance and modus operandi

It is proposed that the STF, acting under renewed mandate to be considered at CMS COP 15, continues to implement Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) and uses the following approach to decide on the level of any take of Saker Falcons from the wild. This will be implemented only where legally possible, to be proposed to COP. Any take should be in line with the recovery objective of the SakerGAP, and the legal, ecological, conservation and social safeguards 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 COPs on the effectiveness of this approach.

The membership of the STF shall be:

- Chair and Vice Chair – as elected at the 1st Meeting.
- STF Secretariat – to be provided by CU of the Raptors MOU
- 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

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.

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 any available information on illegal taking alongside the outputs of the latest population/scenario modelling made by an independent research group or researchers, and make recommendations, subject to annual review, for the next triennium on 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.

Thereafter, following best practice, the STF will meet annually to review any new population and taking data, re-assess the modelling and review the recommended maximum level of take. The Raptors MOU should be informed of the outcome of the deliberations of the STF.

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 a tie. Decisions on national quotas should be made through a three-level (international, national and local) engagement of stakeholders.

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. Population monitoring should be undertaken particularly in priority countries¹ of the range including any participating in quota setting. 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.

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 agreed² 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.

Decision 14.160 Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) Global Action Plan

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 Action Plan (SakerGAP) and to review and update the SakerGAP as the document timeline has passed.

Annex 1.

Legal context for the work of the Saker Falcon Task Force.

Annex 2.

Present membership and role of the Saker Falcon Task Force.

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.

Annex 3.

Proposed revised Terms of Reference for the STF.

¹ As identified by the STF- In Asia: China, Russian Federation (Asian part), Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Afghanistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. In Europe: Hungary, Russian Federation (European part), Ukraine. In Middle East: Iran.

² [Saker Falcon \(*Falco cherrug*\) Global Action Plan \(SakerGAP\)](#), Table 5 on page 64

Legal analysis on the consistency of the development and implementation of an adaptive management framework for the Saker Falcon with the provisions of the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

I. Introduction

1. The European Commission requested the preparation of a legal analysis regarding whether the development and implementation of an adaptive management and monitoring framework for the Saker Falcon would be consistent with the legal requirements of CMS¹.

II. History

2. The Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*) was listed in CMS Appendix I, excluding the population of Mongolia, at the 10th Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties (COP10, Bergen, 2011)².

COP10 Resolution 10.28

3. In connection with the listing of the Saker Falcon in Appendix I, COP10 adopted Resolution 10.28³, later repealed in full by COP12⁴, in which it established a Concerted Action for the Saker Falcon. It also agreed, *“as part of the Concerted Action, on the establishment of a Task Force under the auspices of the Interim Coordinating Unit of the UNEP/CMS Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU), to bring together Range States, Partners and interested parties, to develop a coordinated Global Action Plan, including a management and monitoring system, to conserve the Saker Falcon”*.
4. Resolution 10.28 paragraph 4 included the following text *“Decides that those improvements in the conservation status of the Saker Falcon in any Range State may allow sustainable taking from the wild in that Range State under a management system. In such cases, a Party or Parties may request an exclusion from Appendix I listing to apply in that Range State. The Task Force will endeavour to facilitate this process through the Scientific Council inter-seasonally and through the Conference of the Parties.”*

COP11 Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP12)

5. In Resolution 11.18⁵, COP11 adopted the ten-year Saker Global Action Plan (SakerGAP) *“as the basis for action on the conservation and management of the Saker Falcon in the coming triennium and beyond, with the overall goal ‘to re-establish a healthy and self-sustaining wild*

¹ This analysis does not address the international or national regulation of the take or trade-in of the Mongolian population of the Saker Falcon.

² The proposal for inclusion of the species in Appendix I, excluding the population of Mongolia, was presented by the European Union and its Member States.

³ [UNEP/CMS/Resolution 10.28](#)

⁴ The proposal to repeal the Resolution in full [UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.21/Rev.2/Annex 2](#), Page 24, was adopted by COP12, see [Report of the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS](#), Paragraph 155.

⁵ [UNEP/CMS/Resolution 11.18](#)

Saker Falcon population throughout its range and to ensure that any use is sustainable". The SakerGAP included an analysis of the population trends and threats to the Saker Falcon and set forth a rationale for a management framework for the sustainable use of this species. The preamble of Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP12) made reference to paragraph 4 of Resolution 10.28.

6. As part of the same Resolution, COP11 further decided to continue the Saker Falcon Task Force under the auspices of the Coordinating Unit of the CMS Raptors MoU and instructed the Task Force to:

- "a) Actively promote the implementation of the SakerGAP, including by continuing to facilitate engagement, communication, cooperation and collaboration between the stakeholders;*
- b) Further develop, refine, and implement an adaptive management and monitoring framework to improve the present conservation status of the Saker Falcon through, inter alia, regulated, and sustainable use; and*
- c) Keep under review the option to down-list the species."*⁶

7. COP12 revised Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP12) to establish ongoing reporting obligations for the Taskforce to the COP and made no changes to the instructions to the Taskforce⁷.

III. Applicable CMS provisions for species listed in Appendix I

Prohibition to take species listed in Appendix I

8. Article III.5 of CMS provides that "*Parties that are Range States of a migratory species⁸ listed in Appendix I⁹ shall prohibit the taking of animals belonging to such species.*" Article I.1 i) of CMS defines "taking" to mean "*taking, hunting, fishing capturing, harassing, deliberate killing, or attempting to engage in any such conduct.*"
9. Article III.5 of CMS allows a limited number of exceptions. It provides that "*Exceptions may be made to this prohibition only if:*
 - a) the taking is for scientific purposes;*
 - b) the taking is for the purpose of enhancing the propagation or survival of the affected species;*
 - c) the taking is to accommodate the needs of traditional subsistence users of such species; or*
 - d) extraordinary circumstances so require;*

⁶ [UNEP/CMS/Resolution 11.18 \(Rev. COP12\)](#), para 4

⁷ The proposal to repeal the Resolution in full [UNEP/CMS/COP12/Doc.21/Rev.2/Annex 2](#), Page 44, was adopted by COP12, see [Report of the 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CMS](#), Paragraph Paras 156-164 and 670.

⁸ Article I 1 a) defines a "migratory species" as: the entire population or any geographically separate part of the population of any species or lower taxon of wild animals, a significant proportion of whose members cyclically and predictably cross one or more national jurisdictional boundaries.

⁹ Article III of the CMS Convention, on "Endangered Migratory Species: Appendix I", provides the legal status of the species listed in Appendix I of CMS. Article III.1 states that "*Appendix I shall list migratory species which are endangered.*" Article III.2 specifies that "*A migratory species may be listed in Appendix I provided that reliable evidence, including the best scientific evidence available, indicates that the species is endangered*".

Article I.1 e) of the Convention defines "*Endangered*" in relation to a particular migratory species means that the migratory species is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range". The Conference of the Parties has further interpreted the term "endangered" in Resolution 13.7 paragraph 1 as meaning "*facing a very high risk of extinction in the wild in the near future*". Resolution 13.7 also defines a general correspondence between the term "endangered" as defined within CMS and the IUCN Red List Criteria (Version 3.1).

provided that such exceptions are precise as to content and limited in space and time. Such taking should not operate to the disadvantage of the species.”

Reservations to the Appendices

10. Article XIV.2 of the Convention provides that any State or regional economic integration organization may enter specific reservations concerning the presence of a species on either Appendix I or Appendix II or both on depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession:

“Any State or any regional economic integration organization may, on depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, enter a specific reservation with regard to the presence on either Appendix I or Appendix II or both, of any migratory species and shall then not be regarded as a Party in regard to the subject of that reservation until ninety days after the Depository has transmitted to the Parties notification that such reservation has been withdrawn”.

11. Article XI of the Convention, in paragraphs 5 and 6, provides as follows:

“5. An amendment to the Appendices shall enter into force for all Parties ninety days after the meeting of the Conference of the Parties at which it was adopted, except for those Parties which make a reservation in accordance with paragraph 6 of this Article.

During the period of ninety days provided for in paragraph 5 of this Article, any Party may by notification in writing to the Depository make a reservation with respect to the amendment. A reservation to an amendment may be withdrawn by written notification to the Depository and thereupon the amendment shall enter into force for that Party ninety days after the reservation is withdrawn”.

12. No CMS Parties entered a reservation regarding the listing of the Saker Falcon in Appendix I of the Convention within 90 days from the meeting of the Conference of the Parties at which this listing was adopted, and no States or regional economic integration organizations have entered a reservation regarding the Saker falcon on depositing their instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession¹⁰.

De-listing process

13. The process for delisting a species is established under CMS Article III.3:

III. 3. A migratory species may be removed from Appendix I when the Conference of the Parties determines that: a) reliable evidence, including the best scientific evidence available, indicates that the species is no longer endangered, and b) the species is not likely to become endangered again because of loss of protection due to its removal from Appendix I.

14. If the science-based conditions established in Article III.3 are met, removing a species from the Appendices should follow the process for amending the Appendices outlined in Article XI. Consistent with the definition of migratory species under Article I, an entire population or a geographically separate population of the taxon could be delisted.

15. CMS Resolution 13.7 adds a requirement to consult with relevant Conventions regarding the suitability of removing the protection provided by the CMS Appendices in those instances

¹⁰ The list of reservations can be found here

https://www.cms.int/sites/default/files/basic_page_documents/cms_list_reservations_and_territories_June2020.pdf

where species proposed for delisting are also subject to the provisions of other Conventions to ensure that a complete assessment of the consequences of delisting a species from CMS has been considered within the context of the whole management of the species.

IV. Analysis

16. As stated above, no CMS Parties entered a reservation regarding the listing of the Saker Falcon in Appendix I of the Convention in accordance with relevant provisions¹¹. Therefore, no CMS Parties are excluded from the obligation to fully implement CMS Article III.5 concerning the Saker Falcon, which prohibits the taking of Appendix I species.
17. The language of Resolution 10.28, cited in the preamble of 11.18 (Rev.COP12), which foresees the possibility that *“improvements in the conservation status of the Saker Falcon in any Range State may allow sustainable taking from the wild in that Range State under a management system, and that in such cases a Party or Parties may request an exclusion from the Appendix I listing to apply in that Range State”*, conflicts with the Convention’s prohibition on taking of Appendix I species listed on Appendix I unless it is understood as envisioning a de-listing (“exclusion”) of all or some populations of Saker Falcon that are currently covered by the Appendix I listing.
18. Resolution 11.28 (Rev.COP12) called for the Saker Falcon Task Force not only to develop an adaptive management and monitoring framework (AMF) to improve the present conservation status of the Saker Falcon but also to *implement* an AMF through, inter alia, regulated, and sustainable use.
19. While there is no agreed definition of an adaptive management and monitoring framework under CMS, AMF is commonly understood in the scientific community as an approach for simultaneously managing and learning about natural resources¹². The harvesting or taking of targeted species may or may not be a feature of a particular application of adaptive management. The SakerGAP, endorsed by COP11, clearly anticipates an AMF that may include harvesting or taking of the Saker Falcon.
20. The Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity¹³, mentioned in the SakerGAP, recommend that adaptive management should be practiced based on science and traditional and local knowledge, iterative, timely and transparent feedback derived from monitoring the use, environmental, socio-economic impacts, and the status of the resource being used, and adjusting management based on timely feedback from the monitoring procedures.
21. Developing an adaptive management and monitoring framework, or elements of an AMF, for Appendix I species *per se* is not in itself problematic from a legal standpoint, even if it includes harvesting.

¹¹ As noted in Section II, the Mongolian Population of Saker Falcon is excluded from the listing

¹² William, B.K., 2011. Adaptive management of natural resources – framework and issues, Journal of Environmental Management 92 1346-1353

¹³ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2004, Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (CBD Guidelines) Montreal: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

22. However, if the AMF includes harvesting or taking of the Saker Falcon, it could only be *implemented* when all or the relevant population of the species had been de-listed from Appendix I.

V. Conclusion

23. The development of an adaptive management and monitoring framework for the Saker Falcon would not, by itself, contravene any provision of the Convention. However, any implementation of an AMF that includes harvesting or taking of the Saker Falcon beyond the Mongolian population would contravene Article III.5 unless it is limited to populations, or the entire species, previously delisted from Appendix I.

Prepared by the CMS Secretariat, April 2022

FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE SAKER FALCON TASK FORCE (STF14)

(Online, 26 May 2025)

UNEP/CMS/STF14/Doc.3/Annex2

Membership of the Saker Falcon Task Force

	Country / Organization	Name	Role	Organization
1.	Armenia	Karen Aghababyan	Executive Director	BirdLinks Armenia
2.	Armenia	Sevak Baloyan	Head of the Animal Resources Management Division,	Bioresources Management Agency, Ministry of Nature Protection
3.	Bahrain	Adel Mohamed Al Awadhi	Deputy General Coordinator	Al Areen Wildlife Park and Reserve
4.	BirdLife International	Vicky Jones	Flyways Science Coordinator	BirdLife International
5.	China	Xiangjiang Zhan	Director	Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences
7.	CITES	Thea Carroll	Chief	Science Unit, CITES Secretariat
8.	CMS Scientific Council	Fernando Spina	CMS Appointed Councillor for Connectivity	CMS Scientific Council
9.	CMS Secretariat	Ivan Ramirez	Head	Avian Species Unit CMS Secretariat
11.	European Union	Iva Obretenova	Nature protection policy officer,	DG Environment, Unit D3 Nature Protection, European Union
12.	FACE	David Scallan	Secretary General	The European Federation of Associations for Hunting & Conservation (FACE)
13.	IAF	Adrian Lombard	Chair, Advisory Committee	International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)
14.	IAF	Julian Mühle	CEO	International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)
15.	IAF	Janusz Sielicki	Vice President	International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)

	Country / Organization	Name	Role	Organization
16.	IAF	Omar F. Ahmad	Executive Officer - MENA region	International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey (IAF)
17.	India	Suresh Ramani Kumar	Scientist	Department of Endangered Species Management, Wildlife Institute of India
18.	Iran (Islamic Republic of)	Mohammad Asghari Tabari	bird expert	Wildlife Research Bureau, Iranian Department of Environment
19.	Iraq	Ali Ne'ama Salman	Ornithology researcher	
20.	Iraq	Samer Adnan Hani	Director	Biodiversity Department
21.	IUCN-CEM	Robert Kenward	IUCN-Commission on Ecosystem Management	IUCN
22.	Kazakhstan	Nurlan Kh. Ongarbayev	Executive director	Biodiversity Research and Conservation Center (BRCC)
23.	Kazakhstan	Sergey Sklyarenko	Science Director	Centre for Conservation Biology, Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan
24.	League of Arab States	Nermine Fawaz Talaat Wafa	Head	Programs & Environmental Multilateral Conventions of Biodiversity & Combatting Desertification, League of Arab States
25.	MBZ Raptor Conservation Fund	Andrew Dixon	Head of Science	Mohamed bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund
26.	Mongolia	Nyambayar Batbayar	Director	Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia
27.	Mongolia	Purev Tsogtaiskhan	Head	Environmental Assessment and Auditing division, Ministry of Environment, Green Development and Tourism
28.	Qatar	Zayed Al-Ali, Al-Maadeed	Contract Superintendent, RasGas Company Ltd.	Qatar Falcon Club
29.	Russian Federation	Elvira Nikolenko	Director	Siberian Environmental Center

	Country / Organization	Name	Role	Organization
30.	Russian Federation	Igor Karyakin	Ornithologist,	Ecological Center “Dront” (Russia, N. Novgorod) / Siberian Environmental Centre
31.	Saudi Arabia	Abdullah A Alhakami	Director of Permits Department	National Center for Wildlife
32.	Saudi Arabia	Abdullah bin Hassan Alsuhaibany		Saudi Bird Conservation Association
33.	Saudi Arabia	Bandar Ibrahim Alfaleh	Director of Permits and Legislations Department	National Center for Wildlife
34.	Saudi Arabia	Jaber Haressi	Ornithological Researcher	National Center for Wildlife
35.	Saudi Arabia	Mátyás Prommer	Nature Conservation Expert	Tilad Environmental Consultancy
36.	Saudi Arabia	Mohammed Shobrak	Consultant & Board member at the National Centre for Wildlife	National Center for Wildlife
37.	Saudi Arabia	Younis Abdulwasae Radwan	Assistant Project Manager	Haddad Project, Saudi Falcon Club
38.	Slovakia	Andrea Lešová	Zoologist	Department of zoology, State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
39.	Slovakia	Ján Kadlečík		Directorate, State Nature Conservancy of the Slovak Republic
40.	Slovakia	Peter Puchala	Zoologist	Administration of Malé Karpaty PLA, State Nature Conservancy of Slovak Republic
41.	Slovakia	Zuzana Guziová		Raptors Protection of Slovakia, RPS
42.	Tajikistan	Neimatullo Safarov	Head	Research Laboratory for Nature Protection, National Center for Biodiversity and Biosafety
43.	Ukraine	Maxim Gavrilyuk	Associate Professor	Department of Ecology and Agrobiology, Cherskasy National University / Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds (USPB)

	Country / Organization	Name	Role	Organization
44.	United Arab Emirates	Salim Javed	Division Director - Terrestrial Biodiversity	Terrestrial and Marine Biodiversity, Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)
45.	United Arab Emirates	Shaikha Al Dhaheri	Secretary General	Environmental Agency Abu Dhabi (EAD)
46.	Uzbekistan	Aleksandr Grigoryants	Acting Head	Inspection of State Biological Control, State Committee on Nature Protection of the Republic of Uzbekistan
47.	STF Chair	Colin Galbraith	Chair of the Board	NatureScot
48.	STF	András Kovács	Specialist Technical Advisor for the CU of the Raptors MoU	
49.	Raptors MOU	Umberto Gallo-Orsi	Head	Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit, CMS
50.	Raptors MOU	TBD	Programme Assistant	Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit, CMS
51.	Raptors MOU	Rima Al Mubarak	Administrative Assistant	Raptors MOU Coordinating Unit, CMS

FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE SAKER FALCON TASK FORCE (STF14)

(Online, 26 May 2025)

UNEP/CMS/STF14/Doc.3/Annex3

**SAKER FALCON TASK FORCE (STF)
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Objective

To bring together Range States, Partners and interested parties, to implement the Saker Global Action Plan, to conserve the Saker Falcon (*Falco cherrug*). In particular as per Resolution 11.18 (Rev.COP14) to:

- a) Actively promote the implementation of the SakerGAP including by continuing to facilitate engagement, communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the stakeholders; and coordinate its review.
- b) 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 through, inter alia, regulated, and sustainable use.
- c) Establish an independent scientific process to assess the population status and trend in each region to inform the decision on any quota of birds taken from the wild, and to identify any significant data or information gaps to be assessed by the STF.
- d) Where legally possible and taking account of the recommendation of the independent scientific process, to propose any quota of Saker Falcons that could be taken from the wild for the coming triennium (three-year period following each CMS CoP), and indicate also an indicative level of quota for the subsequent two triennia (giving a projection of nine years in total).
- e) Promote monitoring and research across the range of Saker Falcon, inter alia to fill information gaps on population size and trend, improve knowledge of the genetic structure of Saker Falcon populations and fill knowledge gaps regarding other key parameters needed for population modelling, and contribute new information to any future IUCN global Red List reassessment for the species.
- f) Work collaboratively with the CMS Energy Task Force (ETF) to ensure synergies and identify priority areas for action within the range of the Saker Falcon and promote mitigation measures that could reduce the impact of electrocution from power lines and related energy infrastructure on populations of the Saker Falcon.
- g) In collaboration with the CMS ETF and other expert groups, continue to raise awareness of the serious issue of electrocution of Saker Falcon with energy companies and national governments; and

- h) Ensure synergies with any relevant work proposed under the CMS Central Asian Flyway Initiative to minimise impacts of energy infrastructure on birds.

Membership

The aim is for a relatively small (15 - 20 people) but highly effective Task Force. Membership should be focused on scientific representation, based on nominations from the Range States, Signatories and Partners. Members will be required to take responsibility for leading and driving forward discrete tasks, as identified by the STF. The working approaches adopted may vary and could include teleconferences, e-mail circulation, online fora, meetings, workshops, etc.

The recommended composition of the STF is:

- Chair and Vice Chair – as elected at the 1st Meeting.
- STF Secretariat – to be provided by CU of the Raptors MOU
- 2 CMS Scientific Councilors – 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

The composition of the STF this may be modified by the STF, as required.

Following each CMS COP, STF members shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from among the Task Force Members. They should serve for one term and may be re-elected.

Roles and Responsibilities

Chair/ Vice Chair

- Suggest meeting dates and provide deadlines for actions by the STF Members and contributors.
- Develop meeting agendas, in consultation with the CU.
- Conduct meetings and facilitate events, in collaboration with the CU.
- Provide guidance and follow up on Action Points, through the CU.
- Review key papers and scientific assessments (e.g., population status, threats, etc.), as necessary.
- Report to CMS COP, Raptors MOU MOS, and CMS Scientific Council.

CU – Secretariat to the STF

- Review the draft Work Plan of Priority Actions for the STF, in collaboration with the Chair/Vice Chair.

- Prepare and facilitate logistics and other support to aid the implementation of the Work Plan by Members of the STF, including the establishment and implementation of the modular Saker Falcon Adaptive Management Framework.
- Coordinate with Range States, Partners and other parties, in close collaboration with the Chair/Vice Chair.
- Gather and disseminate information on relevant issues, as required.
- Develop, implement, and follow up on Small Scale Funding Agreements (SSFAs) with relevant bodies, Governments, other parties, and consultants, as appropriate.
- Liaise with the CMS Scientific Council and CMS Secretariat and support the technical assessment and monitoring mechanisms.
- Oversee the compilation and submission of Reports to the Meetings of Signatories of the Raptors MoU, the Meetings of the CMS Scientific Council, CMS COPs and other bodies, as required (to be presented by the Chair).

Members of the STF

- Lead in taking forward key tasks, as directed by the STF.
- Participate actively in meetings, events and in correspondence issued by the CU on behalf of the STF.
- Establish and support the Saker Falcon Adaptive Management Framework nationally and regionally.
- Encourage and facilitate local, national, and regional actions to support the implementation of SakerGAP (e.g., surveys, management, monitoring, etc.).
- Monitor the implementation of SakerGAP and its effectiveness, as well as existing impediments for adequate implementation of the SakerGAP.
- Provide relevant information to the STF in a timely manner, including via the CU.
- Suggest sound ideas and review the feasibility of conservation and management measures that might be proposed on a case-by-case basis.
- Coordinate nationally and regionally with their other Government colleagues and STF members of their region, as appropriate.
- Coordinate with the Focal Points of other MEAs at a national and regional level, as required.
- Pro-actively participate actively in fundraising activities.
- Act as 'champions' to promote the conservation of the Saker Falcon.

Reporting

Resolution 11.18 (rev. COP14) indicates the following reporting framework and the timeline for the Task Force:

- Report to each Meeting of Signatories of the CMS Raptors MOU.
- Report on the Inter-sessional CMS Scientific Council Meeting; and
- Review progress on implementing the SakerGAP and report to the 15th Meeting of the CMS Conference of the Parties.