

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 ABOUT SADC

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a community founded and maintained by countries in southern Africa that aim to further socio-economic, political and security cooperations among its Member States and foster regional integration to achieve peace, stability, and wealth. SADC spans 9.8 million square kilometres across 16 member states committed to principles of human rights, equity, and mutual benefit as established in the 1992 SADC Treaty (SADC, 1992). The Member States are Angola, Botswana, Union of Comoros, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Figure 1). All Member States (MS) are regional culture range states except the island states of Seychelles, Comoros, Mauritius and Madagascar.



Figure 1: SADC countries (source: SADC, 2020)

1.2 INTRODUCTION TO VULTURES IN THE SADC REGION

In Africa, wildlife resources are fundamental to regional economies and livelihoods, with vultures providing essential ecosystem services including carcass disposal, environmental sanitation, disease outbreak monitoring, and tourism support (Murn et al., 2016). There are 23 species of vulture in the world, with 16 'Old World' species of the Family Accipitridae found in Africa, Europe, and Asia; and 7 'New World' species of the Family Cathartidae found in the Americas and the Caribbean. SADC hosts nine vulture species including the endemic Cape Vulture (*Gyps coprotheres*) and their current conservation status is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary table for vulture species found in Southern Africa

Species	IUCN Redlist Status	Habitat	Range
White-backed Vulture (<i>Gyps africanus</i>)	Critically Endangered (270 000 individuals)	Savannas, grasslands, and open woodlands	Widely distributed across the SADC region
Cape Vulture (<i>Gyps coprotheres</i>)	Endangered (12 714 mature individuals)	Mountainous areas and open grasslands	Primarily found in South Africa, Lesotho, Botswana, and Namibia
Hooded Vulture (<i>Necrosyrtes monachus</i>)	Critically Endangered (197 000 individuals)	Savannas, woodlands, and human-inhabited areas	Found in various SADC countries, often near human settlements
Lappet-faced Vulture (<i>Torgos tracheliotos</i>)	Endangered (8 500 individuals)	Arid and semi-arid regions, savannas, and deserts	Present in most SADC countries, especially in dry areas
White-headed Vulture (<i>Trigonoceps occipitalis</i>)	Critically Endangered (3 685 mature individuals)	Savannas, woodlands, and open country	Scattered populations across the SADC region
Rüppell's Vulture (<i>Gyps rueppelli</i>)	Critically Endangered (220 000 individuals)	Mountainous regions and savannas	A foraging and breeding resident in Tanzania with occasional records in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia.
Palm-nut Vulture (<i>Gypohierax angolensis</i>)	Least Concern (unknown)	Coastal forests, mangroves, and palm-rich areas	Mainly found in coastal areas of Mozambique, Tanzania, and Angola, with a few recorded observations in the eastern highlands of Zimbabwe. There is a breeding population along the east coast of South Africa as far south as Scottburg.
Egyptian Vulture (<i>Neophron percnopterus</i>)	Endangered (12 000-38 000 mature individuals)	Arid regions, open savannas, and cliffs	Considered largely extinct from the southern SADC region with unconfirmed reports of possible breeding in northern Namibia and southern Angola. The species is recorded as possibly breeding in northern Tanzania.

Species	IUCN Redlist Status	Habitat	Range
Egyptian Vulture (Neophron percnopterus)	Critically endangered (1 300-6 700 mature individuals) (200 mature individuals in S Africa) It is estimated that the population consisted of around 60% adults and 40% non-adults, comprising of between 352 and 390 individuals in the Maloti Drakensberg range. (Kruger and Amar 2021).	Almost exclusive in remote high mountain zones, with precipitous terrain, usually above 1000m. However, juvenile birds are sometimes encountered far away from mountains.	Restricted distribution in the SADC region in Tanzania. South Africa and Lesotho. The species is also distributed within the Maloti-Drakensberg Mountains of Lesotho and South Africa with population estimated at between 368-408 individuals, with only 109-221 breeding pairs.

Only the White-headed Vulture, Hooded Vulture and Cape Vulture are endemic to Africa. Some vulture species show extensive ranging behaviour. White-backed Vulture and Rüppell's Vulture tend to move northward within Africa, primarily to East Africa and the Sahel region. The Hooded Vulture moves towards West Africa and the Sahel. The Egyptian Vulture has a broader movement pattern, including movements within Africa and to other continents like Europe and Asia. These routes demonstrate the extensive movement undertaken by vultures from the SADC region, highlighting their ecological connectivity across vast distances. Vultures are highly mobile birds and regularly cross-national boundaries, travelling up to 400km daily from breeding colonies (Phipps et al., 2013), necessitating coordinated regional conservation efforts to protect the birds across their range.

1.3 THE ROLE OF VULTURES IN THE ECOSYSTEM

Vultures play a crucial role in ecosystems and offer numerous benefits that underscore the importance of their conservation. The key reasons why vultures are vital and should be protected are outlined below:

Ecosystem Health and bio-indicators: Vultures are scavengers that primarily feed on carrion (dead animals). Their feeding habits contribute to ecosystem health and are therefore useful bio-indicators. By consuming dead animals, vultures help prevent the spread of disease (e.g. Chen et al., 2023; Van Den Heever et al., 2021). Their presence reduces the risk of outbreaks of diseases such as anthrax or rabies, which can occur when carcasses decompose in the open. Research has also shown that whilst vultures reduce disease spread, they have also been shown to be vectors of pathogens, carrying anthrax spores across the landscapes they forage in (IUCN Vulture Specialist Group 2020). Vultures contribute to nutrient cycling within ecosystems. The decomposition process initiated by vultures helps enrich the soil and supports the growth of new plant life. Their decline can have cascading effects on other scavenger species, leading to increased competition for resources and potential declines in those populations as well (e.g. Gore et al., 2020; Garbett, 2018). As apex scavengers, their population decline often signals broader environmental issues, such as habitat degradation or the presence of harmful wildlife management practices (like poisoning).

Biodiversity Support: Vultures are integral components of the ecological balance (Santangeli et al., 2024). They help maintain healthy animal populations by ensuring that the dead and dying do not accumulate, which can otherwise lead to overpopulation of undesirable species like feral dogs, blowflies, and rodents leading to an imbalance in ecosystems (Ogada et al., 2011).

Cultural and Economic Importance: In various cultures, vultures are viewed as symbols of purification and renewal. They are often part of local folklore and rituals. Vultures contribute indirectly to agriculture by preventing the spread of livestock diseases, which can save farmers significant costs in livestock management and health.

Conservation Legacy: The conservation of vultures is also part of a larger commitment to biodiversity and the health of our planet. Protecting these birds can be seen as a moral responsibility to ensure that future generations inherit a balanced and functioning ecosystem (Santangeli et al., 2019).

Thus, in summary, vultures are indispensable to the health of ecosystems, biodiversity, and human well-being. Efforts to protect vultures ultimately support sustainable ecosystems and contribute to overall environmental health.

1.4 THREATS TO VULTURE SURVIVAL

Most vulture species are experiencing alarming population declines of 80-97% over three generations (Ogada et al., 2016), primarily due to several key threats. The predominant cause of these declines is poisoning, responsible for 61% of the mortalities, which includes both intentional poisoning of herbivores during poaching activities and unintentional poisoning related to lead poisoning and the consumption of baits intended for other animals (van den Heever 2019). Other significant threats include belief-based use (29%), infrastructure collisions, particularly electrocution on power lines (9%), and various other causes (1%) (Botha et al., 2017; Gore et al. 2020). Habitat loss and the reduction of available nest trees are also some of the factors affecting the vultures in many southern African countries. Understanding and addressing these threats is essential for formulating effective conservation strategies.

1.5 EFFORTS TO CONSERVE VULTURES

At the global level, initiatives such as the Convention on Migratory Species' Vulture Multi-Species Action Plan (Vulture MsAP) (CMS, 2017) address vulture conservation through globally coordinated efforts to mitigate threats and protect habitats. This framework fosters international collaboration and emphasizes the importance of phasing out harmful practices, such as sentinel poisoning, lead ammunition and the illegal trade of vulture parts. Continental vulture conservation initiatives, largely involving NGOs, focus on strategic outreach and policy advocacy that emphasizes habitat preservation and comprehensive conservation strategies. Collaborative efforts aiming to establish legal protection for vultures, improving monitoring systems, and engaging in capacity-building measures among countries to address common threats to vulture populations have not been given adequate attention at the Southern African level. Prior to this document, there was no earlier SADC Vulture Conservation Strategy and Action Plan in place. However, Vulture MsAP provided guidance on critical actions for all vulture range states including, in the SADC region. The Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching Strategy (LEAPS) running from the year 2022 to 2032 offer some mechanisms that also protect the vulture species, and biodiversity in general. Further, specific national strategies have been developed and are being implemented at country level in some SADC member states, for example in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Lesotho, Botswana, Zambia, Namibia and these must be coordinated and aligned with this document to enhance regional cooperation for vulture conservation. There are also actions towards specific species, for example the artificial breeding and reintroduction programs for the Bearded Vulture, and rehabilitation and nest site protection programs for the Cape Vulture programs in Lesotho and South Africa (Brink, Kruger and Amar, 2020). The TFCA agreement also provides a basis in which various actions for vultures can ride on. There is also a need for an emphasis on improving knowledge sharing and data collection to fill existing knowledge gaps and enhance conservation outcomes at a regional level.

1.6 INADEQUACIES OF THE PAST AND CURRENT VULTURE CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Despite various initiatives and frameworks aimed at conserving vultures (Botha et al., 2017; Endangered Wildlife Trust, 2020), significant inadequacies persist at global, continental, and regional levels. These inadequacies undermine the effectiveness of existing conservation strategies and hinder efforts to reverse the alarming population declines of these ecologically vital species. The main gaps for the SADC region were identified and collated in the vulture situational analysis. The key shortcomings drawn from the Situation Analysis are outlined in the Table 2 below.

Table 2: Gaps identified for vulture conservation in the SADC region and rationale for the SADC VCSAP

Resource and capacity gaps	Government institutions across the region face constraints in human and financial resources, impacting their ability to fulfil essential planning, oversight, and coordination roles effectively. Member states also reported the critical shortage of personnel with avifaunal knowledge and applied conservation skills and it will be critical for the strategy to establish mechanisms to equip Member States with these skills. Additionally, fostering collaborations among communities, governmental agencies, and NGOs enables resource sharing and knowledge exchange, creating a robust network of skilled advocates. Ultimately, investing in capacity and skills development strengthens conservation efforts and promotes biodiversity and ecological resilience.
Threat assessment and Monitoring gaps	Many SADC range States lack comprehensive threat assessments, particularly for significant issues like lead poisoning, which remains inadequately monitored across most of the region. Similarly, the impact of energy generation and transmission on vulture populations is poorly studied in most Member States, creating a critical knowledge gap that requires systematic assessment and monitoring programs. Effective conservation depends on robust monitoring systems to track population trends and intervention success, yet many regions face significant data deficits regarding vulture populations (Santangeli et al., 2019), breeding success, and behavioural patterns—hindering targeted conservation planning and response. Infrastructure development significantly impacts vultures by altering habitats and disrupting foraging behaviour, necessitating clear guidelines for projects to minimize habitat destruction and human-wildlife conflict. Such guidelines should ensure preservation of critical feeding and nesting sites while promoting eco-friendly designs that facilitate safe movement and mitigate collision and electrocution risks. By prioritizing these infrastructure and development guidelines within vulture conservation strategies, we can advance sustainable development while protecting these essential scavengers and their habitats.
Knowledge and understanding	The scale and nature of belief-based use of vultures shows varying levels of understanding across Member States. There is a lack of basic information about belief-based practices, hindering effective conservation strategies. Despite ongoing research, critical knowledge gaps remain in understanding the ecological significance of vultures and the complex factors driving their declines. Limited baseline data can lead to misguided conservation efforts, underscoring the need for focused research on vulture ecology, social behaviours, and responses to threats. There also is a stark disparity in the research efforts across SADC countries. There also are gaps in the geographical coverage of research efforts, with more research needed in poorly studied areas.
Data management	<p>There is a significant gap in the systematic collection, collation, and sharing of data regarding vulture populations, trends, threats, and mortalities.</p> <p>The absence of integrated national databases that can feed into a comprehensive SADC regional database limits the effectiveness of conservation efforts. A unified, collaborative approach is critical to address these trans-boundary threats, ensuring consistent conservation strategies in</p>

Data management

their movement. By fostering data sharing, harmonizing conservation policies, and coordinating anti-poisoning efforts among nations, we can create a safer environment for these keystone species. Prioritizing international collaboration allows for leveraging shared resources, expertise, and political will to maximize conservation impact. Ultimately, a robust, globally coordinated effort is essential to safeguard wide ranging vultures and maintain the critical ecological services they provide.

Awareness, Education and Advocacy Challenges

There are significant gaps in coordination and cooperation between Member States regarding vulture conservation and advocacy. Effective advocacy campaigns are needed to cultivate a better understanding of vultures' roles in the ecosystem, dispel myths surrounding these birds, and galvanize public support for conservation measures. The absence of a comprehensive regional framework limits the effectiveness of conservation efforts for the highly mobile species. Community engagement is vital for fostering local support for conservation initiatives. Although the International Vulture Awareness day is celebrated on the first Saturday of September each year, many of the arranged programs overlook the importance of involving local communities, particularly those most affected by the presence and decline of vultures. Without meaningful engagement and education efforts, there is a risk of sustaining cultural practices that contribute to vulture declines, such as poisoning for traditional or economic reasons. Engaging stakeholders and local communities in vulture conservation is essential for understanding the socio-economic dynamics that influence human-wildlife interactions and leveraging valuable traditional knowledge to inform effective strategies. By addressing community concerns and integrating their perspectives, conservation initiatives can be tailored to be culturally appropriate and sustainable, fostering a sense of ownership that encourages locals to become advocates for vulture protection. This participatory approach can reduce human-vulture conflicts and enhance ecosystem health, benefiting both wildlife and human populations while creating lasting conservation impacts that align with community needs and values.

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Implementation Framework gaps

There are gaps in regulatory frameworks at both regional and national levels, with significant gaps in implementation and enforcement mechanisms. While there are numerous conservation policies and agreements in place, many countries struggle with effective implementation (Santangeli et al., 2019). Legislative frameworks that have been developed often lack the necessary enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance. This results in a gap between policy formulation and on-the-ground action, allowing harmful practices, such as poisoning and illegal trade, to continue unabated. Policy and governance issues are fundamental to vulture conservation, establishing the framework for implementation of conservation efforts. Effective policies must address critical threats including habitat loss, poisoning, and illegal trade. Success requires collaborative approaches between government agencies, conservation organizations, and local communities to develop and enforce protective regulations.

Implementation Framework gaps	Raising awareness among policymakers about vultures' ecological significance is essential for developing more comprehensive conservation strategies. Strong governance practices ensure transparency and accountability in resource management dedicated to vulture conservation initiatives. Addressing these policy and governance dimensions strengthens the overall effectiveness of conservation efforts and supports the long-term survival of vulture populations.
Population Assessment – Data collection monitoring	Regular and standardized vulture population assessments using recognized survey methods are currently lacking thereby creating a gap in understanding trends, productivity, and viability over time. Vultures are highly mobile creatures that traverse national boundaries, yet conservation efforts often fail to reflect this reality. There is inadequate coordination (Santangeli et al., 2019) between adjacent range states, leading to fragmented conservation approaches. Without a concerted effort to address threats that transcend borders, such as illegal poisoning and habitat loss, the efficacy of conservation initiatives is severely compromised. Data and monitoring provide the essential foundation for informed decision-making and adaptive management in vulture conservation, enabling systematic collection of information on populations, behaviour, habitat usage, and threats. Effective monitoring initiatives can include GPS tracking of individual birds, regular population surveys, and assessments of food source availability—vital information for understanding challenges like habitat loss, poisoning, and human-wildlife conflict. Furthermore, robust data collection facilitates collaboration among researchers, governments, and NGOs, enabling coordinated responses to vulture conservation needs. By prioritizing these monitoring efforts, conservation strategies can remain evidence-based and responsive to changing dynamics, ultimately supporting vulture recovery and long-term survival.
Fragmented Habitat Protection	While habitat protection is recognized as essential for vulture conservation, efforts often lack integration with broader land-use and development policies. As human development continues to encroach on natural habitats, conservation initiatives may fail to provide adequate protection for critical breeding and feeding sites, further threatening vulture populations.
Resource Mobilization and Allocation	Funding and resource allocation are pivotal for the success of vulture conservation initiatives, as these efforts require financial backing and strategic resource management. Adequate funding enables research, habitat restoration, community engagement programs, and the implementation of protective policies, ensuring comprehensive approaches to address vulture declines. By prioritizing financial support for vulture conservation, governments, NGOs, and private stakeholders can mobilize the necessary human and technological resources to effectively monitor populations and implement conservation strategies. Allocating resources wisely also allows for the integration of conservation efforts with agricultural and land management practices, which can mitigate conflicts between human needs and wildlife conservation. In addition, securing long-term funding streams encourages sustainability and resilience in conservation programs, fostering innovation and adaptive management. Ultimately, effective funding and resource allocation are fundamental to building a robust framework for vulture conservation, enabling impactful and lasting results.

While various efforts exist at global, continental, and regional levels for vulture conservation, significant inadequacies challenge their overall effectiveness. It is therefore essential for the SADC region to develop a cohesive and successful strategy to reverse the decline of vulture populations and ensure their ecological sustainability for future generations (Ogada et al., 2016; Santangeli et al., 2019).



1.7 KEY STAKEHOLDERS IN VULTURE CONSERVATION

National wildlife and environmental departments across SADC Member States serve as primary regulatory authorities for vulture conservation. These agencies establish protected areas, develop wildlife policies, and enforce conservation laws. Environmental impact assessment units evaluate development projects that may affect vulture habitats or create hazards such as power infrastructure. Academic and scientific organizations (universities and national museums) Energy infrastructure developers and providers are critical stakeholders as power infrastructure poses a significant threat to vultures. These include both hydro and thermal power companies, and the emerging wind power companies. Traditional leaders hold authority within communities and can promote conservation values and discourage harmful practices that threaten vultures. Farmers and livestock owners manage land where vultures forage and may use poison for predator control thereby unintentionally killing vultures. Engaging this sector is essential for reducing poisoning incidents and establishing Vulture Safe Zones. International organizations like the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), IUCN Vulture Specialist Group, and international donors provide technical guidance and financial support for conservation efforts in the region. Journalists, wildlife filmmakers, and communication specialists help raise public awareness about vulture conservation challenges and successes, influencing both policy and public support.

1.8 RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION OF THE VULTURE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

The development of a comprehensive vulture conservation strategy for the SADC region is founded on compelling ecological, economic, and practical imperatives. Vultures serve as nature's essential clean-up crew, with their scavenging activities limiting disease spread throughout ecosystems. A single vulture can consume approximately 1.5kg of carbon daily, providing ecological services valued at millions of dollars annually (Brander et al., 2025). The absence of these efficient scavengers leads to significant ecosystem disruption and sanitation challenges across the landscape.

The conservation status of vultures in the region has reached a critical point, with six of the nine Southern African vulture species now classified as critically endangered or endangered. Population assessments reveal alarming declines of 80-97% over just three generations for most species (Ogada et al. 2016; Botha et al., 2017). Their naturally slow reproduction rates—typically producing only a single chick annually—severely limit their recovery potential without substantial intervention (Mundy et al. 1992).

The trans-boundary nature of vulture movements necessitates a regional approach to conservation. These birds routinely traverse SADC national borders during foraging, making individual country efforts insufficient to address their protection needs. GPS tracking studies clearly demonstrate that vultures recognize no political boundaries, requiring conservation strategies that match their extensive ranging behaviour. Threats such as poisoning incidents similarly demand coordinated responses across national jurisdictions.

From an economic perspective, vultures contribute significantly to the region's ecotourism sector while providing valuable ecosystem services through efficient carcass removal. Their scavenging activities help prevent the transmission of diseases among livestock populations, offering tangible economic benefits to agricultural communities throughout the SADC region (Brander et al. 2025).

Despite the existence of the global Multi-species Action Plan under the Convention on Migratory Species, implementation remains inadequate across the SADC region. Current frameworks suffer from limited regional coordination and insufficient harmonization of conservation approaches, creating gaps that undermine conservation effectiveness. These challenges highlight the need for a SADC-specific vulture conservation strategy.

By establishing a unified SADC approach, the strategy aims to address current challenges through coordinated action that respects vultures' wide-ranging behaviour while leveraging regional governance structures to ensure effective implementation.

Some SADC Member States (Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, and Zambia) are not members of the CMS. By developing a comprehensive SADC Vulture Conservation Strategy and Action Plan, these countries can proactively address the threats to vulture populations while ensuring their conservation practices are consistent with international standards. This approach fosters a unified regional response to vulture declines, addressing shared challenges such as habitat loss, poisoning, and infrastructure-related mortality. It also enables countries to leverage resources, share best practices, and participate in collaborative research and monitoring efforts that can enhance the effectiveness of conservation actions. Ultimately, the development of this strategy and action plan represents an essential step in ensuring the long-term survival of vultures and their ecosystems.

Participants, including representatives from SADC Member States and conservation NGOs, discussed the obstacles to vulture conservation, proposed solutions, and defined the strategy's purpose and objectives. This process aimed to link SADC-specific actions with the Vulture MsAP and the conservation priorities of both signatory and non-signatory member states.

Following the situation analysis, the second step involved the development of the SADC VCSAP, which primarily relied on findings from the situation analysis, the Vulture MsAP, and other relevant documents. The draft strategy was submitted to Member States for comment and inputs, before being finalized and validated by the SADC Technical Committee on Wildlife and recommended to Ministers for final approval.

2.2. SYNERGY AND GUIDING INSTRUMENTS FOR VULTURE CONSERVATION IN THE SADC REGION

At the global level, the SADC VCSAP supports the implementation of the Vulture MSAP and complements the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on biodiversity conservation (SDG 15) and sustainable communities (SDG 11). The strategy reinforces the African Union's Agenda 2063 and supports the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources, offering a practical framework for integrating vulture conservation into broader wildlife initiatives.

Within the SADC region, the strategy operationalizes key principles from the SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation and Law Enforcement, providing species-specific guidance and addressing conservation needs across borders. It also recognizes the contributions of vultures to ecotourism and ecosystem services, aligning with the SADC Wildlife-based Economy Strategy Framework. While there is currently no overarching vulture conservation strategy at the continental level, existing regional instruments—including the SADC Law Enforcement and Anti-Poaching Strategy, the SADC Trans-frontier Conservation Areas (TFCA) programme, and the draft SADC Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2025-2035)—provide essential context for addressing transboundary challenges. These documents establish the legal groundwork for cooperation and guide the integration of vulture conservation into broader biodiversity objectives. The SADC Situation Analysis of Vulture Conservation (September 2024) offers critical regional context, supported by political mandates from the 2023 SADC Joint Meeting of Ministers responsible for Environment, Natural Resources, and Tourism.

The strategy is further informed by a range of national vulture conservation frameworks from countries such as Zimbabwe, Tanzania, and South Africa, incorporating valuable insights regarding vulture ecology, population monitoring, and context-specific interventions. An analysis of national policies ensures that the strategy complements existing frameworks, identifies opportunities for implementation, and addresses gaps that require harmonization.

Various international, continental, and regional instruments relevant to the development of this strategy are listed in Annex 1. By aligning with these various global, continental and regional instruments, the SADC Vulture Conservation Strategy and Action Plan emerges as a practical framework for coordinated action that acknowledges the transboundary nature of vulture conservation while building on existing initiatives at all levels.

2 2.0 THE APPROACH TO DEVELOPING THE VULTURE CONSERVATION STRATEGY

2.1 THE APPROACH

The Joint meeting of SADC Ministers responsible for Environment, Natural Resources, and Tourism in June 2023 acknowledged ongoing vulture conservation efforts across the region and directed the SADC Secretariat to engage key partners for a study on the conservation status of vultures and related bird species, along with the development of a draft conservation strategy.

The development process consists of two main steps: first, a situation analysis, followed by strategy development. The situation analysis established a solid understanding of vulture species, their status, and conservation challenges. Researchers compiled population data, threat assessments, and conservation status information from all member states using standardized assessment protocols. This process included literature reviews, consultations with regional experts, in-depth interviews, and bilateral discussions with representatives from various countries. Key document sources informed the analysis, including the Vulture MsAP and relevant peer-reviewed papers. Thirteen government officials from SADC countries were interviewed, and draft country profiles were shared during a workshop for participant input.

In September 2024, a two-day workshop titled "SADC Vulture Conservation Strategy Situation Analysis Report Review and Strategy Planning" was held in Johannesburg, South Africa.