

ANNEX 5: ACTION PLAN FOR PRIORITY AREA 4: DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING

Strategic Objective: By December 2035, conduct at least three long-term regional population assessments in collaboration with all range member states to gather satellite tracking data for all vulture species in the region, map critical habitats and movement corridors, and implement a capacity-building program for at least 10 local experts in vulture conservation practices in each Range State.

Strategies	Activities	Outcomes	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeline											Responsible	Other Actors	Level of Implementation		
						'25	'26	'27	'28	'29	'30	'31	'32	'33	'34	'35					
Strategy 1: Enhance vulture monitoring	Activity 1: Establish regional and national baseline data for key indicators, including vulture populations, habitats, threats, poisoning, and other relevant factors. This foundational data will serve as the starting point for our goal to double the area covered by tracked vulture movements by 2035, using the baseline established in 2026.	Comprehensive baseline data on vulture populations, their habitats, threats, and poisoning incidents established	Number of Regional and Range States that developed standardized baselines formats and reports	One regional and 12l Range States baselines reports	Documentation creating the baselines format, Final baseline data report, including methodology, findings, and recommended actions for vulture conservation.													SADC, RMS	Partner NGOs, Researchers, local communities	National, Regional	
	Activity 2: Establish and implement comprehensive standardized monitoring programs to track vulture populations, mortality rates, movement patterns, and threats to their survival and threats in key habitats.	Standardized monitoring programs developed	Number of national standardized monitoring protocols for vulture population assessments, including methods for data collection, analysis, and reporting	12 Range State standardized monitoring protocols	Documentation of monitoring protocols, including training materials, methodologies, and data collection sheets.													RMS	Partner NGOs	Regional	
	Activity 3: Implement advanced technologies such as GPS tracking and remote sensing to gather accurate data on vulture movements and habitat use.	Advanced technologies (e.g., GPS tracking and remote sensing) deployed	Number of Range States that launched advanced technologies programs	All Range States	Documentation of the advanced technology program, implementation reports													RMS	Partner NGOs, Local communities, Researchers	Local, National	
	Activity 4: Develop and implement a standardized survey protocol, including methodology, frequency, and sampling strategy, to ensure accurate and consistent data collection.	Comprehensive and standardized survey protocol developed	Number of standardized national survey protocols	12 Range State Survey protocols	A finalized, accessible protocol document that includes all components—objectives, methodologies, sampling strategies, and analysis frameworks. Implementation reports, M&E reports													RMS	Partner NGOs, Local communities, Researchers	National, Regional	
	Activity 5: Provide training and capacity building for survey teams, including data collectors, observers, and analysts, to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge.	Skills and competencies of survey teams enhanced	Number of Range States that launched national training and capacity building programs	All Range States	Documents approving the national program, Training modules, implementation reports													RMS	Partner NGOs, Local communities, Researchers		
	Activity 6: Develop a centralized database to store and manage survey data, including population numbers, habitat use, and other relevant information.	See Strategy 1, Activity 4, this Priority Area 4.																			
	Activity 7: Prepare and disseminate reports on survey findings, including results, recommendations, and implications for conservation, to stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and local communities	See Strategy 1, Activity 3, this Priority Area																			

Strategies	Activities	Outcomes	Indicators	Targets	Means of Verification	Timeline '25 '26 '27 '28 '29 '30 '31 '32 '33 '34 '35												Responsible	Other Actors	Level of Implementation
	Activity 8: Collaborate with key stakeholders, including local communities, NGOs, and governments, to ensure that surveys are conducted in a way that is respectful, inclusive, and responsive to local needs and concerns.	A framework for collaborative partnerships with local communities, NGOs, and governmental bodies created	Number of collaboration Agreements by each Range State	At least 10 Partnerships with different stakeholder groups	Partnership documents, implementation reports													RMS, NGOs, Local communities		Local, National
Strategy 2: Enhance research on vultures	Activity 1: Establish and implement comprehensive vulture research programs, and partner with universities and research organizations to conduct studies, covering a variety of relevant topics to inform and improve conservation strategies for vultures	High-quality scientific data, insights, and a solid knowledge base regarding vulture ecology, threats, and conservation need generated	Number of Range States that commissioned national vulture research programs	All Range States	Documentation of national research programs, and research findings to inform the development and/or revision of vulture conservation strategies													RMS	NGOs, Researchers	National
	Activity 2: Develop citizen science initiatives to involve local communities in data collection and monitoring of vulture populations.	Community engagement and awareness in vulture conservation efforts increased	Number of Range States that launched national citizen science programs for vulture monitoring	All Range States	Documentation of launching the national citizen science program, implementation reports, M&E reports													RMS, local communities	Partner NGOs	Local, National
	Activity 3: Develop and implement standardized framework to analyze key vulture population and habitat parameters, and socioeconomic, and policy-related data at both regional and national levels.	A well-defined analysis framework with clear objectives that align with national and regional conservation goals developed	Number of analysis frameworks	One standardized analysis framework for adaptation by Range States	A formal report or document listing the established objectives for the analysis framework, indicating alignment with national and regional conservation goals.													SADCS, RMS	Researchers	Regional
	Activity 4: Disseminate research findings through various channels, including workshops, publications, and conferences to increase awareness and inform conservation efforts	Awareness of vulture conservation issues increased	Number of Range States that change conservation practices or policies influenced by research findings, as reported by stakeholders.	All Range States	Documentation of the conservation practices and policies, implementation reports													RMS, local communities	Partner NGOs	Local, National, Regional
	Activity 5: Establish a centralized database that compiles vulture monitoring data, making it accessible for researchers, policymakers, and conservationists.	Comprehensive and accessible centralized database that enhances the availability and usability of vulture monitoring data	Number of regional and national centralized data bases	One regional and 12 Range State national databases	Documentation of the database development process, and implementation reports													RMS	Partner NGOs, Local communities, researchers	National, Regional
	Activity 6: Regularly assess the effectiveness of implemented conservation strategies and adapt them based on empirical research outcomes.	An adaptive management framework that ensures the continuous improvement of conservation strategies for vultures is based on systematic assessments and empirical evidence	Number of assessments conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of existing conservation strategies.	Annual national assessments done by Range State, Mid-term and final assessments done by the Region and Range States	Reports or documents summarizing each assessment conducted, including methodologies and findings.													SADCS, RMS	Partner NGOs	National, Regional

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	Activity 7: Collaborate with key stakeholders, including local communities, NGOs, and governments, to ensure that surveys are conducted in a way that is respectful, inclusive, and responsive to local needs and concerns.	A framework for collaborative partnerships with local communities, NGOs, and governmental bodies created	Number of collaboration Agreements by each Range State	At least 10 Partnerships with different stakeholder groups	Partnership documents, implementation reports													RMS, NGOs, Local communities		Local, National
Strategy 3: Collaborate with international organizations to develop a shared data platform and reduce data gaps.	Activity 1: Engage with relevant international organizations, NGOs, and governmental bodies to gather support and involvement in the data platform initiative.	Collaboration and support from international organizations, NGOs, and governmental bodies for the data platform initiative increased	Number of partnerships formed with international organizations, NGOs, and governmental bodies. Number of joint initiatives or projects launched in collaboration with engaged stakeholders.	10 partnerships formed and or joint projects launched by SADC secretariat and 10 by each Range State	Documentation of partnership and joint initiatives, implementation reports, M&E reports													RMS, International organizations, NGOs, Government bodies		National, Regional
	Activity 2: Conduct a needs assessment to identify existing data sources, gaps in information, and specific requirements for the shared data platform	A comprehensive understanding of existing data sources, gaps in information identified, and specific requirements for the shared data platform established	Number of reports on comprehensive needs assessment, existing data sources, gaps in information, and requirements for the data platform.	One Regional report, 12 Range State reports	Reports on needs assessment, existing data sources, gaps in information, and requirements for the data platform.													RMS	Partner NGOs	National, Regional
	Activity 3: Activity 3: Design, develop, and implement a user-friendly and accessible shared data platform in collaboration with technical experts and partners. Additionally, provide training and resources for stakeholders to effectively use the platform and contribute data.	A user-friendly and accessible shared data platform designed, developed, and implemented	Number of shared data platforms	One Regional shared platform, 12 national Range State shared platforms	Project documentation outlining the design process, technical specifications, and development milestones achieved													RMS	Technical experts	National, Regional
	Activity 4: Create and implement standardized guidelines and protocols for data sharing, including standards for data formats, access permissions, and privacy considerations.	Guidelines and protocols for data sharing that ensure standardized practices and address access, permissions, and privacy consideration established	Number of sets of approved standardized data sharing guidelines, protocols, and standardized data formats	One set for the Region, One set for each Range State	Finalized document of guidelines, protocols, and data formats, Implementation reports													RMS	Technical experts	National, Regional
	Activity 5: Establish and implement systems for ongoing monitoring, evaluation, and maintenance of the platform to ensure its long-term sustainability and effectiveness.	A robust monitoring, evaluation, and maintenance system for the data platform established	Number of monitoring systems	One regional system, One national system per Range State	Documentation of monitoring reports, evaluation summaries, and maintenance logs detailing the performance of the platform and any interventions undertaken.													RMS	Partner NGOs	National, Regional

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Strategy 4: Adopt and deploy suitable technologies in vulture research and monitoring.	Activity 1: Research and improve suitable tracking and monitoring technologies, such as GPS devices, drones, camera traps, and aerial surveys, tailored to the specific vulture species under study, while considering factors like size, weight, and battery life.	Appropriate GPS tracking devices and technologies tailored to the specific needs of the targeted bird species being studied identified	A set of GPS tracking devices and technologies suitable for the vultures	One agreed set for the Region and Range States	Comparison charts or matrices that visually represent the suitability of various GPS devices based on established criteria.													SADC, RMS	Technical experts, Vulture researchers	National, Regional
	Activity 2: Create and implement a detailed protocol for capturing and fitting GPS devices to individual birds, ensuring that the methods are ethical and minimize stress to the animals.	A comprehensive and ethically sound protocol established for capturing and fitting GPS devices to individual birds	Number of standardized protocol for the Region and Range States	One agreed and approved standardized protocol for the Region and Range States	Finalized protocol document reviewed and approved by relevant ethical boards or committees, showcasing adherence to ethical standards and practices													SADCS, RMS	Ethical Board	National, Regional
	Activity 3: Provide training to field teams on how to safely capture birds, attach tracking devices, and collect data, while adhering to relevant ethical guidelines.	Field teams trained and equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to safely capture birds, attach tracking devices	Number of training programs conducted	One launching program by the Region, one training programs after 2 years by Range States														SADCS, RMS	Partner NGOs	National, Regional
	Activity 4: Analyze tracking data and prepare comprehensive reports and visualizations of the tracking data to effectively communicate key findings to stakeholders, policymakers, and the scientific community. This will enable the integration of GPS data into broader conservation initiatives.	Understanding of vulture movement patterns and habitat usage improved	Number of reports produced	One Regional and 12 Range State annual and end of project reports	Documentation of report dissemination													RMS		National, Regional
	Activity 5: Develop outreach materials to inform the public on the project, the importance of bird movement and habitat use, and how technology is being used for conservation.	Public awareness and understanding of bird movement, habitat use, and the role of technology in conservation increased	Number of national outreach programs launched	12 national outreach programs launched by 12 Range States	Approved outreach launch documents, implementation reports, public feedback reports													RMS	Partner NGOs	National, Regional
Strategy 5: Share and coordinate data at the regional level	Activity 1: Conduct national and regional surveys to gather baseline data on vulture populations, distribution, and habitat conditions, ensuring accurate and comprehensive input for the database.	See Strategy 2, Activity 1 (This Annex)			(This Annex)															

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	Activity 2: Develop and implement robust central data management systems to track trends in vulture populations, illegal killing/trade, and conservation efforts (initiatives).	Making data-driven decision-making for vulture conservation possible.	Functional central data management system	One regional and 12 national (Range State) functional central data management systems	Comprehensive documentation outlining the design, features, and functionalities of the data management system, including software specifications and user manuals.												RMS	Technical experts	National, Regional	
	Activity 3: Develop standardized protocols for data collection and quality control procedures (on vulture sightings, nesting sites, mortality causes, and threats, ensuring consistency, reliability, and comparability across all contributing Member States.	Consistency, reliability, and comparability of data across all contributing Member States for effective conservation management achieved	Standardized data collection protocols and quality control guidelines.	One set of standardized data collection protocols and quality control guidelines.	Finalized and officially approved documentation outlining the standardized protocols for data collection and quality control procedures, including definitions, methodologies, and data entry formats.												RMS	Researchers, technical experts	National	
	Activity 4: Train national and regional wildlife conservation staff on data management and database usage while organizing regular regional forums for knowledge sharing and capacity building related to database development.	Capacity of national and regional wildlife conservation staff enhanced. Data entry accuracy, analysis capabilities, and overall conservation impact improved	Percentage of trained staff in Data Management	All staff working with data management SADC and Range States	Module content, List of staff trained and retrained.													RMS	Trainers	National, Regional
	Activity 5: Form a committee consisting of experts and stakeholders from member states to guide database development, ensure compliance with conservation goals, and oversee data sharing efforts.	Alignment of database with conservation objectives, and facilitates efficient data-sharing practices among member states achieved	The number of member states represented in the committee	All Range States representation	Official records of committee meetings, including agendas, minutes, attendance logs, and decision-making processes.													RMS		National, Regional
	Activity 6: Develop and deploy a secure, accessible, and user-friendly online platform to facilitate data uploading, sharing, analysis, and collaboration among range Member States for vulture conservation efforts.	See Strategy 3, Activity 3 (This Annex)																		
	Activity 7: Develop and formalize agreements among range states regarding data sharing protocols, confidentiality, and data usage to foster cooperation.	See Strategy 3, Activity 4 (This Annex)																		
	Activity 8: Set up a regional monitoring framework to track the effectiveness of the database in informing conservation efforts and identify trends over time.	The impact of database utilization on conservation efforts assessed, and the identification of trends over time to inform adaptive management strategies facilitated.	A standardized framework for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the database in supporting conservation initiatives.	One standardized framework for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the database.	Official documents outlining the monitoring framework, including indicator definitions, data collection methods, and evaluation criteria.													SADCS, RMS	NGOs	Regional

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	Activity 9: Implement or facilitate collaborative projects that leverage shared data to address trans-boundary vulture conservation issues, such as poaching, habitat loss, and poisoning incidents.	Measurable improvements in conservation outcomes across regions achieved.	Number of Collaborative Projects Initiated by each member state	10 collaborative projects	Detailed project proposals, partnership agreements, and action plans outlining the goals, strategies, and expected outcomes of each initiative.												RMS		Local, National
	Activity 10: Facilitate partnerships between regional research institutions to conduct studies based on data collected in the database, addressing key threats to vultures collaboratively	Understanding of key threats to vultures and the development of effective conservation strategies based on empirical findings from database analyses achieved	Number of research programs between neighbouring Range States	At least one research program between a Range State and of its neighbours.	Documents of signed partnership agreements, research proposals, research outputs												RMS		National, Regional