

## Benefits, Entitlements and Responsibilities of Signing the MOU on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU)

### Introduction

The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) is the only global convention specializing in the conservation of migratory species, their habitats and migration routes. It is an Intergovernmental Treaty, concluded under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme, which is concerned with the conservation of wildlife and habitats on a global scale.

CMS acts as a framework Convention. It catalyses national-level conservation activities amongst its Contracting Parties, while encouraging Range States to develop more specialised regional or global agreements and dedicated action plans covering single or groups of migratory species. The Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MOU) is one such regional agreement. It was finalised and opened for signature in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE), on 22 October 2008, and came into effect on 1 November 2008.

The Coordinating Unit (CU) of the Raptors MOU is located in CMS Office - Abu Dhabi, established in 2009 at the kind invitation of Environment Agency - Abu Dhabi (EAD). CMS Office - Abu Dhabi and the CU are generously funded by EAD, on behalf of the Government of the United Arab Emirates.

The Raptors MOU recognizes the extensive distribution of migratory African-Eurasian birds of prey by including 131 Range States within its geographical coverage. A total of 94 species are considered migratory within the region.

States that are not yet Parties to the Convention are welcome to sign the Raptors MOU. Although the MOU is not a legally binding arrangement, it is recognised as an international agreement.

Currently there are 66 Signatories to the Raptors MOU.

### Aims

The MOU aims to promote and support Signatories in taking coordinated actions to achieve and maintain a favourable conservation status of African-Eurasian migratory birds of prey throughout their range, and to reverse any declines in their populations.

### Benefits and Entitlements

Some of the many ways in which Signatories to the Raptors MOU can benefit include:

- Access to support in developing National or Regional conservation strategies for

migratory birds of prey (taking account of the need for collaborative trans-boundary measures);

- Invitations to attend and fully participate in Meetings of the Signatories with the opportunity to influence future policies and implementation of the Raptors MOU;
- Access to support in developing partnerships or collaborative raptor conservation activities with other Range States, Inter-Governmental (IGOs) or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs);
- Invitations to participate in Capacity-Building or Technical Workshops, including potential access to funding to support attendance at these gatherings;
- Ability to nominate candidates to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) of the Raptors MOU;
- Access to technical advice and support from the TAG;
- Exposure on the CMS Raptors MOU website to highlight a Signatory's key achievements in African-Eurasian birds of prey conservation;
- Opportunities to apply for 'Letters of Support' from the CU of the Raptor MOU to elevate the standing of applications or proposals for funding of raptor conservation projects;
- Access to funding opportunities for raptor conservation initiatives (e.g. through small grants or in partnership with other Range States or Co-operating Partners);
- Enhanced international standing by cooperating with other Signatories in global and regional raptor conservation efforts;
- Access to a range of other international networks, specialists, IGOs and NGOs.

Any effective measures introduced to conserve migratory raptors are likely to support the conservation of other species of wildlife and ultimately contribute to the conservation of biodiversity. Implementation of the Raptors MOU supports achievement of the Samarkand Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (2024-2032), the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework's Global Targets 2030 under the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (2016-2030).

## **Responsibilities**

Signatories to the Raptors MOU agree to implement the provisions of the MOU in a spirit of good faith, consensus, cooperation and mutual support. Implementation is expected to the extent resources permit. Signatories have the responsibility to strive to adopt, implement and enforce such legal, regulatory and administrative measures as may be appropriate to conserve migratory birds of prey and their habitats.

Signatories should endeavor to coordinate their efforts, to cooperate in emergency situations requiring concerted international action, to take appropriate measures for the recovery of bird populations, to exchange information, and to cooperate with a view to assisting each other to implement the Raptors MOU, particularly in the areas of research and monitoring. Furthermore, Signatories should work toward developing National or Regional raptor conservation strategies or equivalent documents (e.g. Single or Multi-species Action Plans).

To ensure use of the most appropriate communication channels, Signatories have the responsibility to designate a National Contact Point (NCP) for all matters relating to the implementation of the MOU, and to communicate the name and address of the NCP to the Coordinating Unit as soon as possible after signing the MOU.

Financial contributions to the MOU are not mandatory. This gives Signatories the flexibility to make a voluntary contribution when they have the capacity to do so. A scale of suggested voluntary financial contributions to support activities under the MOU is adopted

at each Meeting of Signatories. Voluntary financial and/or in-kind contributions to provide for the on-going operations of the Raptors MOU are always welcome.

### **Generic arrangements for signing the Raptors MOU**

The Coordinating Unit offers various options for States wishing to sign the Raptors MOU:

- Signature by the country's Ambassador to the UAE, either at CMS Office - Abu Dhabi, or at the country's Embassy, whichever is most convenient for both parties.
- Signature by the responsible Minister or by another official with delegated authority. This may be arranged in the country concerned or in any other country on the occasion of a relevant meeting/workshop, where the Minister or the other official and a representative of the CU are both present.
- Signature at a Meeting of Signatories, CMS Conference of the Parties (or other meetings organised by the CU, or the CMS Secretariat) by the Ambassador of the country concerned or by a duly accredited official who presents to the CU a suitable original Instrument of Full Powers, prior to the meeting.

The MOU takes effect for a new Signatory on the first day of the month following the date of signature.

*Kindly contact the Coordinating Unit of the CMS Raptors MOU in Abu Dhabi at: [cmsoffice.ae@un.org](mailto:cmsoffice.ae@un.org) to make the necessary arrangements, or if you have any questions.*