One Species, 62 Range States:

Launching the Global Action Plan

for the Conservation of the iconic

Steppe Eagle

CMS
RAPTORS MOU
АСБК
RSPB
MINISTRY OF ECOLOGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN
المركز الوطني لتنمية الحياة الفطرية
National Center for Wildlife
المملكة العربية السعودية

CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES
COP15
BRAZIL
PANTANAL
CAMPO GRANDE 2026

THE EARTHSHOT PRIZE
Winner
2024
Nature

Event outline

- **Introduction** - Umberto Gallo Orsi, Raptors MOU
- **Overview of the Plan** – Jenny Weston, RSPB
- **The Steppe Eagle in Kazakhstan** - Ayazhan Duisengaliyeva Forestry and Wildlife Committee, of Kazakhstan and Ruslan Urazaliyev, ACBK
- **The Steppe Eagle in Saudi Arabia** – Mohammed Shobrak, NCW
- **Questions and discussion**

RAPTORS
MOU

Umberto Gallo Orsi

Raptors MOU

The Steppe Eagle (*Aquila nipalensis*)

- Large long-distance migratory raptor of the Central Asian and East African-Eurasian Flyways
- Estimated 30,000 pairs after declines of more than 50% in recent decades
- Breeding stronghold in Kazakhstan
- Wide wintering areas

CMS Raptors MOU

- Endangered (since 2015)
- CMS Appendix I and II
- Category 1 under the Raptors MOU

- At COP14 *Resolution 12.12 (Rev. COP14)* and *Decision 14.145 on Action Plan for Birds*

Jenny Weston

RSPB

Threats

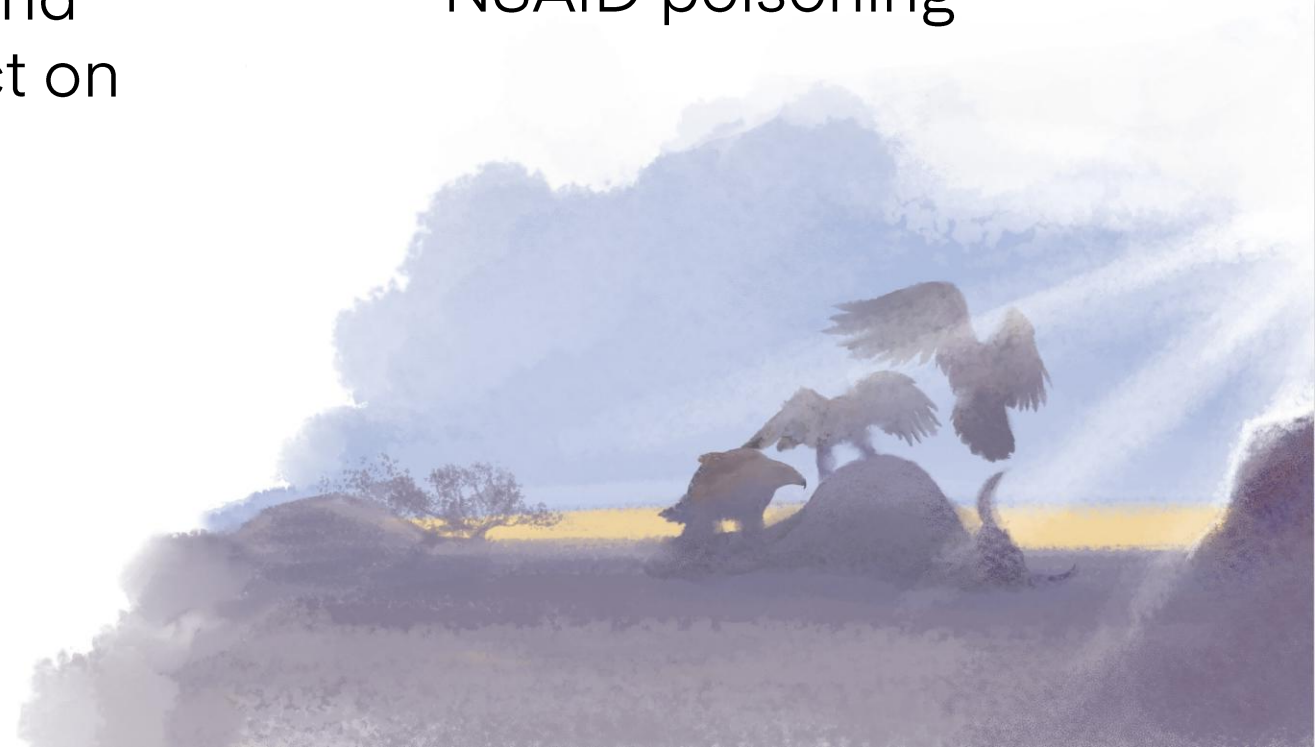
Electrocution

Threat is present throughout the range and has a significant impact on adult survival

Poisoning

Many different forms:

- Rodenticides
- Human Wildlife Conflict
- Unknown impact of NSAID poisoning



Threats

Illegal and unsustainable take

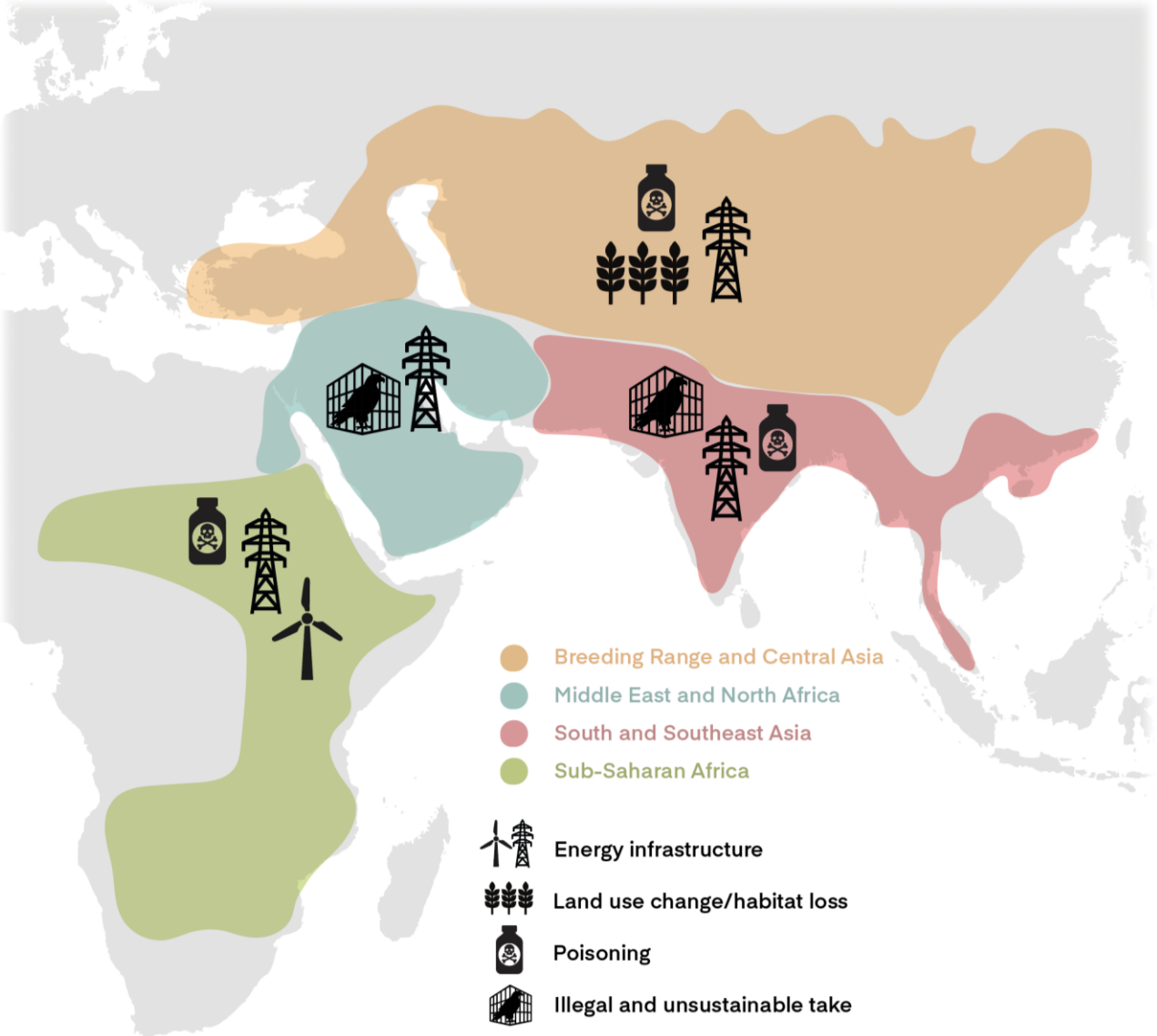
Focussed in the Middle East and Southeast Asia

Habitat loss

Loss of steppe habitat due to conversion to agriculture as well increased steppe fires and reduced food availability.

Threats by region

Most threats to Steppe Eagle are present across their range but the exact nature and scale varies by region



Why an action plan?

For migratory raptors, such as Steppe Eagle, international cooperation is of particular importance.

Collaboratively designed and adopted international action plans provide a framework for state and non-state actors across range states to work together to improve a species' conservation status

Our 2035 Vision

Halt and reverse the decline of the Steppe Eagle by delivering innovative actions in science-based conservation and community engagement across its whole range.

6 Strategic Goals

1. Reduce the impact of **energy infrastructure** on Steppe Eagles along the flyway
2. Reduce significantly mortality due to impact of **legal and illegal take and trade**
3. Understand and reduce the impact of **unintentional poisoning** on Steppe Eagle populations
4. Attain **good quality habitats** that support populations of Steppe Eagle across the species' range
5. Address **key knowledge gaps** on Steppe Eagle distribution, movement, and threats through increased **collaboration and coordinated research**, to inform conservation action across their global range
6. Ensure endorsement and effective implementation of the Steppe Eagle GAP across all range states through **outreach with key communities and all major stakeholders**

1. Reduce the impact of energy infrastructure on Steppe Eagles along the flyway

1.3.1	Identify the highest risk areas through promoting wider coverage of sensitivity mapping tools (such as Avistep, etc), and by paying particular attention to bottleneck and congregation sites, prioritising assessments of the powerlines and windfarms for electrocution and collision risks in these key areas. **Dependencies**: 1.1.2, 1.1.3, List of important sites (see 2025 list in Annexe)	Energy Utilities	**Timescale:** Short
1.3.2	Ensure all key breeding areas, bottleneck and congregation (such as dumpsites and landfills) have safe electricity transmission infrastructure through the replacement and retrofitting of dangerous infrastructure (burying underground, insulation, diverters etc) and that new infrastructure also meets these standards. **Dependencies**: 1.1.3, 1.3.1	National Authorities (wildlife management & energy), Energy Utilities, Conservation NGOs	**Timescale:** Short

Priority scale of actions: Critical High Medium Low

2. Reduce significantly mortality due to impact of legal and illegal take and trade

2.3.1	Enhance enforcement of illegal take and trade laws in hot-spot areas by building cooperation and capacity between conservation organizations (i.e. both governmental and non-governmental) and law enforcement agencies. **Dependencies**: 2.1.3	National Authorities, Conservation NGOs, MIKT, SWAITB TF	**Timescale:** Short

Priority scale of actions: Critical High Medium Low

3. Understand and reduce the impact of unintentional poisoning on Steppe Eagle populations

3.1.1	Conduct research and disseminate literature on critical chemicals likely to affect the fitness (health and population productivity) and/or survival of Steppe Eagle throughout its range.	National Authorities, Academic Institutions, Research Agencies, Conservation NGOs	**Timescale:** Short
3.1.2	Understand the extent of use, impact and contamination pathway of NSAIDs, pest control chemicals and other environmental contaminants (such as heavy metals) at or near breeding and congregation sites including systematic sampling and analysis of primary food resources. **Dependencies**: 3.1.1, 5.2.1	National Authorities, Academic Institutions, Research Agencies, Conservation NGOs, Waste management authorities	**Timescale:** Immediate
3.1.3	Sample live Steppe Eagles and fresh eagle carcasses, in a timely effective manner to determine cause of death and presence of critical chemicals and disease, recorded in a centralised database to enable data sharing. **Dependencies**: 3.1.1, 3.1.2	National Authorities (state testing laboratories, wildlife management), Research Agencies, Conservation NGOs, CITES Authorities	**Timescale:** Short

4. Attain good quality habitats that support populations of Steppe Eagle across the species' range

4.1.1	Conduct targeted research, in the breeding, migratory and non-breeding ranges on habitat use, site connectivity and diet, to fill key knowledge gaps.	Academic Institutions, Research Agencies, Conservation NGOs	**Timescale:** Short
4.2.3	Ensure key congregation sites (including dump sites) are managed to ensure they provide safe roosting and feeding opportunities for Steppe Eagles through safe energy infrastructure and no access to poisoned food resources.	National authorities, Waste authorities, Electricity companies	**Timescale:** Short

Priority scale of actions: Critical | High | Medium | Low

5. Address key knowledge gaps on Steppe Eagle distribution, movement, and threats through increased collaboration and coordinated research, to inform conservation action across their global range

5.2.1	Carry out species monitoring (at all life stages) using standardised methods to guide sensitivity mapping and conservation action.	National Authorities, Conservation NGOs	**Timescale:** Immediate
5.2.4	Develop and share opportunities and sources of funding for monitoring, data analysis, research and advocacy.	CMS Secretariat, SE GAP Working Group	**Timescale:** Short

Priority scale of actions: Critical High Medium Low

6. Ensure endorsement and effective implementation of the Steppe Eagle GAP across all range states by increasing outreach with key communities and all major stakeholders

6.1.2	Highlight and promote the Steppe Eagle as a flagship species of the Central Asian and African-Eurasian Flyways, utilising and supporting existing national and international events to raise awareness of Steppe Eagle global conservation needs and efforts.	Conservation NGOs, CMS, National Authorities, CAFI	**Timescale:** Short

Priority scale of actions: Critical High Medium Low

Next steps

Convene a Working Group from across their range and appoint a coordinator.

Ratify relevant legislation to protect Steppe Eagle and provide the legal frameworks to mitigate threats.

Develop and fund projects to fully implement to Action Plan, focussing initially on those of highest priority

MINISTRY OF ECOLOGY
AND NATURAL RESOURCES
OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN

Ayazhan Duisengaliyeva
Kazakhstan

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Strengthening conservation efforts in Kazakhstan for raptor conservation by signing the Raptor MoU

RAPTORS MOU

CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES
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UZBEKISTAN 12-17 FEBRUARY 2024

From Fragmented to Systemic Management

Past: Fragmented Measures

- Reactive ecological interventions
- Siloed institutional efforts
- Voluntary corporate mitigation

Present & Future: Systemic Management

- Amendments to the Law on the Protection, Reproduction, and Use of Wildlife.
- Legal establishment of dedicated Species Action Plans (SAPs).
- Statutory powers for authorized bodies to enforce targeted recovery plans aligned with international standards.

THREATS

- Steppe fires
- Habitat loss
- Electrocution

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Our work

АСБК

Our work


UKRAINE
KAZAKHSTAN
ROMANIA
Black Sea
Caspian Sea
UZBEKISTAN
TURKMENISTAN
TURKEY
SYRIA
IRAQ
IRAN
AFGHANISTAN
PAKISTAN
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
OMAN
YEMEN
SUDAN
Arabian Sea
Bucharest
Istanbul
Ankara
Athens
Damascus
Baghdad
Tehran
Kuwait City
Riyadh
Abu Dhabi
Muscat
Karachi
Cairo
Khartoum
Djibouti
Tashkent
Ashgabat
Dushanbe
Kabul
Islamabad
Baku
Tbilisi
Yerevan
0
2 000

Our work

Work with power lines companies

Public awareness and education

Improvement of data gathering methods

International agreements support and policy improvement

المركز الوطني
لتنمية الحياة الفطرية
National Center for Wildlife
المملكة العربية السعودية

Mohammed Shobrak
Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: An Important Wintering Area for the Steppe Eagle

Mohammed Shobrak

National Centre for Wildlife

CMS

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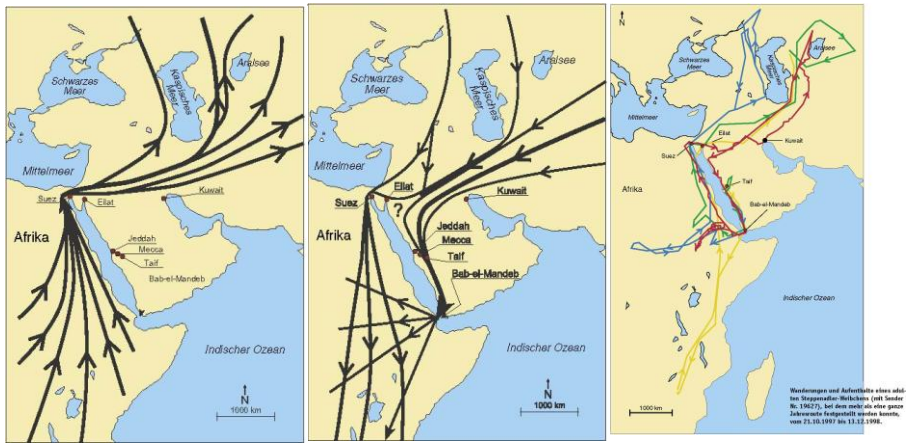
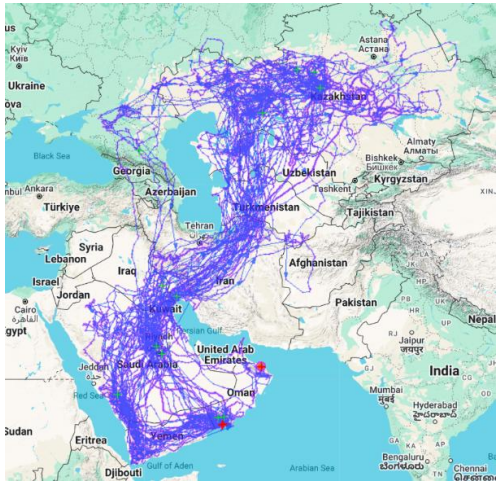
Tracking Data showed that Saudi Arabia is an important passage territory during migrations and important wintering area for the species

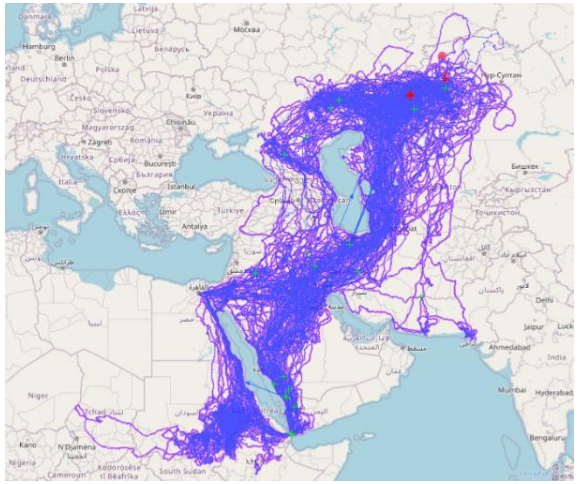
Scientific Name	IUCN Red List Status Global / Reginal	Species Status at the International Agreement	Population Status (Trend)
Aquila nipalensis	**EN/EN**	**CITES II, CMS I&II Raptor MoU 1**	**WV/PM Decrease**



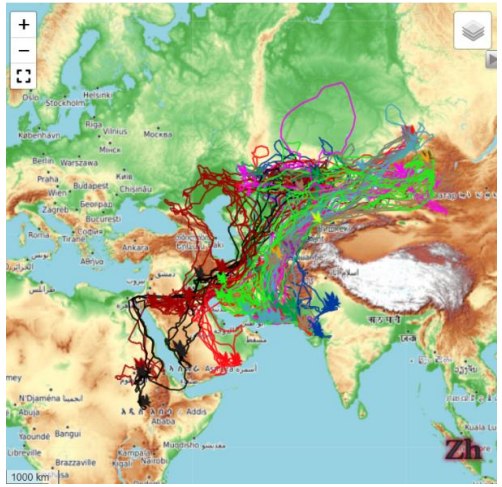
Meyburg, B.-U., Meyburg, C. and Paillat, P. (2012) Steppe Eagle migration strategies revealed by satellite telemetry. *British Birds* 105:5 06.



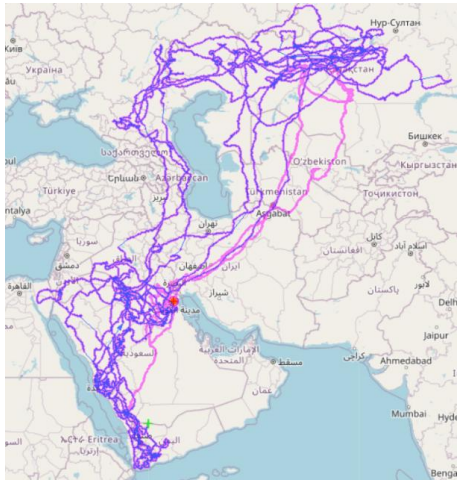
13 Steppe eagles trapped in Oman (Meyburg and McGrady)



20 juvenile Steppe eagles tracked from KZ (Sapir and Efrat)



13 Steppe eagles tracked from Kazakhstan and Russia. (RRRCN data)

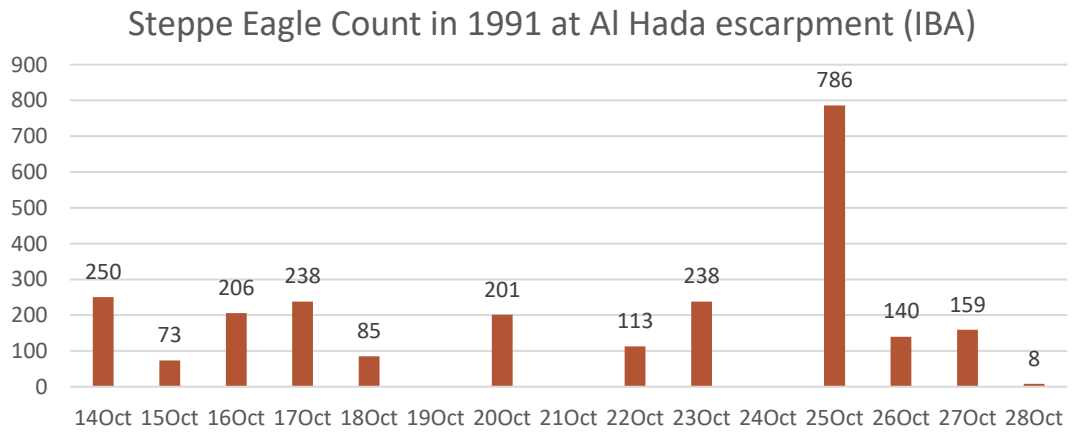


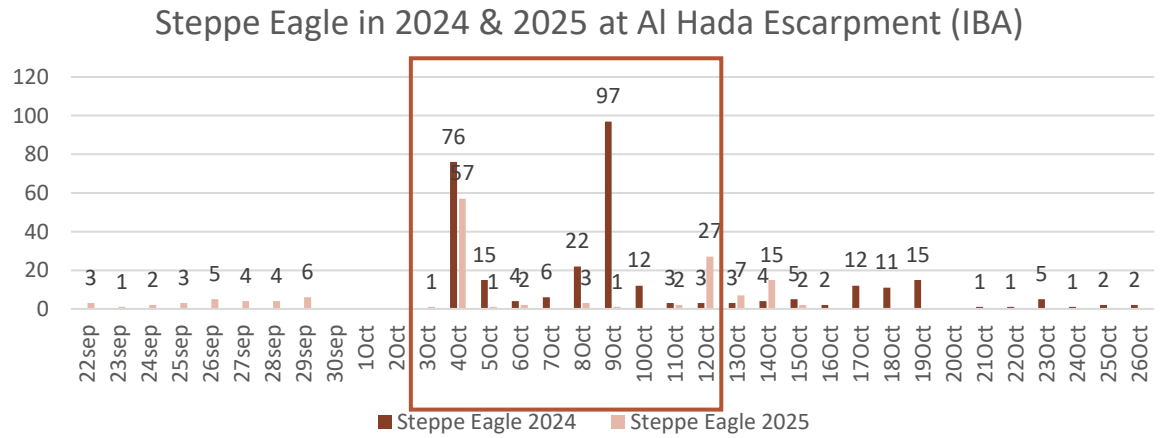
2 Steppe eagles tracked from Kuwait (Kuwait Environmental Lens, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science).

Al Hada Escarpment (IBA, Bottleneck Count)

- During the second half of October 1991, raptors counts were conducted at Al Hadda Escarpment (IBA), with 2001 ST were found.
- At the same area, covering the same time in 2024 & 2025. The results showed more than 85% decline in number and the beak of migration was slightly earlier than in 1991

Year	No. counted
1991	2,001
2024	302
2025	144



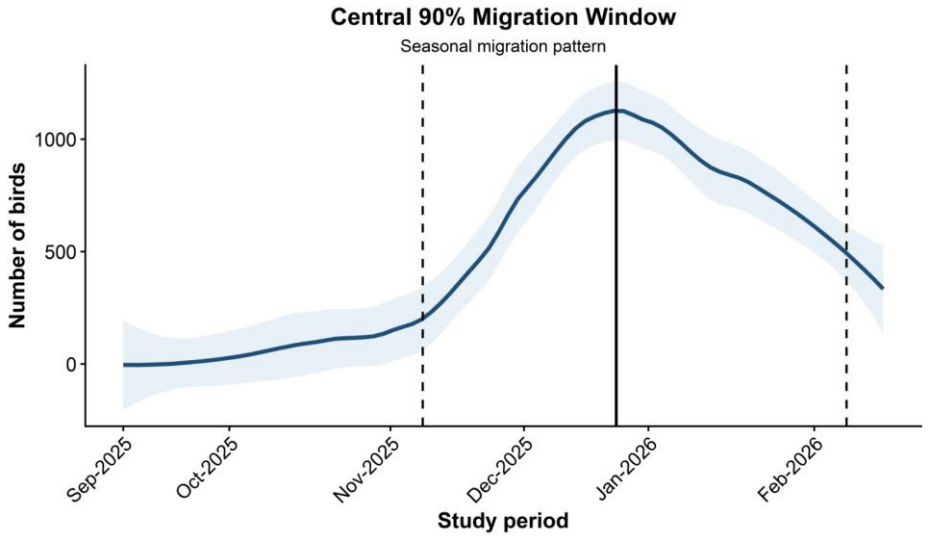


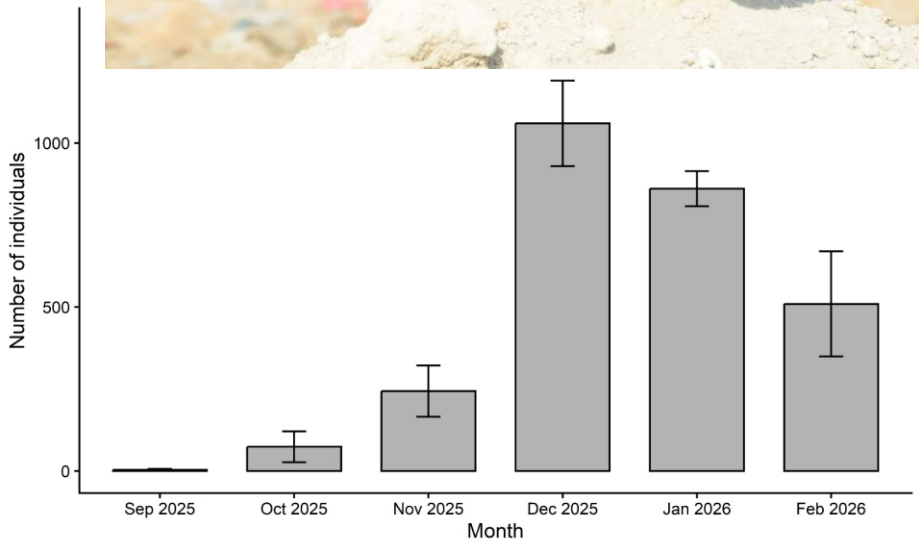
Monitoring Congregation Sites along the Flyway

- In November 2019, the world's largest known wintering congregation of Steppe Eagles was discovered near a dumpsite at Ushaiqer in central Saudi Arabia, with more than 6,000 ST (Keijmel et al. 2020). In November 2023, a survey conducted at the same sites reported approximately 4,000 individuals (NCW, 2023). Recently in winter 2024-2025 the same areas the number of SE dropped to 500 individuals (Mátyás Prommer per. Comm). This presents 92% decline.
- On other hand, in autumn of 2022 at a landfill located within the Important Bird Area (IBA) in Tubarjal, situated in northern Saudi Arabia around 2,900 individuals were documented (BirdLife, 2023). While in 2024-2025 the number was scattered and distributed between pivot farms and livestock camps with estimation between 860-1000 individuals, which presents 68% decline (Al Zoubi pers. Comm).

Monitoring Congregation Sites along the Flyway

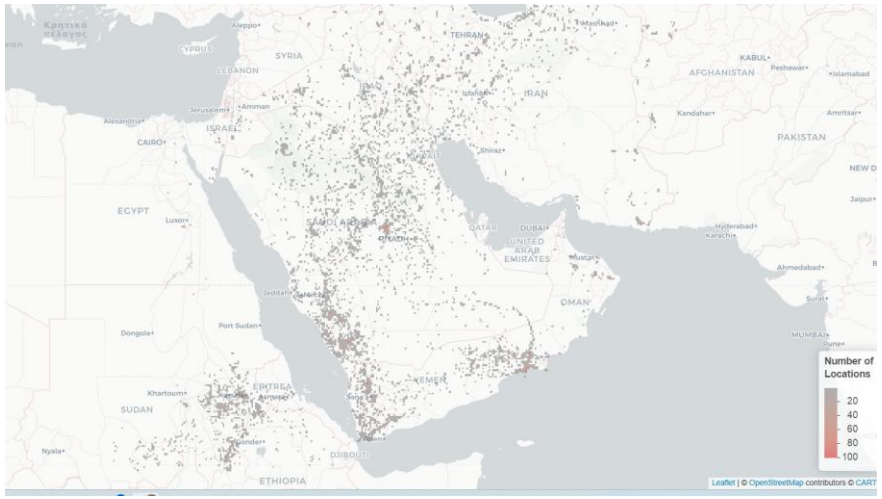
- A dumpsite north east of Taif was monitored since August 2025 up to date, with 4-7 counts a month.
- The results showed that the arrival started late September early October, with sharp increase in between November & December



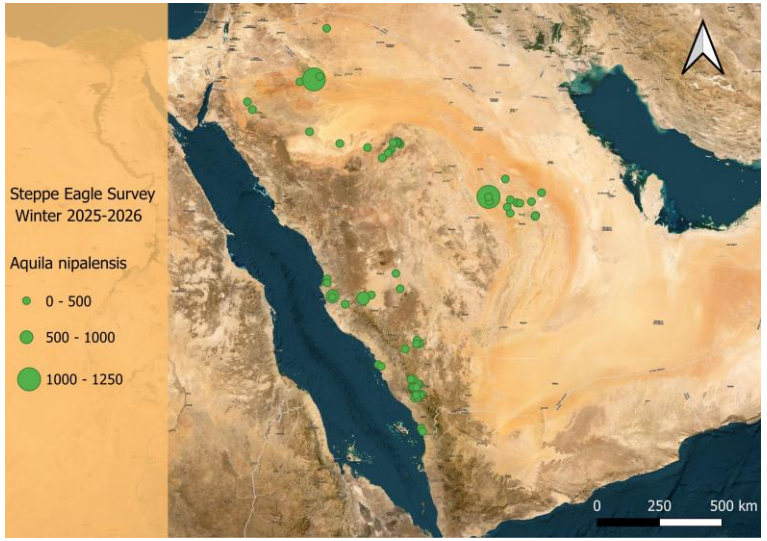


Monitoring Congregation Sites along the Flyway

- National Centre for Wildlife, Saudi Birds Society, National Centre for Waste Managements and Private sectors work with volunteers to count Steppe Eagle around the Kingdom.
- The total number of participants was 72, Covering 91 Sites, The total number of raptor counted was 15,061 raptors,
- The Steppe Eagle was 8,000, which presenting 53% of the total number of raptor counted.



Heat map of landings of tracked eagles from Oman (Meyburg and McGrady) and Kazakhstan (Sapir, Efrat, Katzner, Miller). Red areas likely indicate dumpsites where eagles congregate.



Threats

Threat description	Severity	References
Energy infrastructure (Powerline "Electrocution & Collision) and Wind farms	**High**	**Shobrak, et al. 2020 Shobrak, et al. 2021 Shobrak 2023**
Poisoning: In direct poisoning, as feeding in poisoning carcasses. Possibly the used of Nonstreroidal Anti-inflannatory Drugs "NSAIDs" such as Diclofenac	High	Shobrak, et al. 2020 Shobrak, et al. 2021
Illegal Killing (reported by falcon trappers they shoot the species to protected the falcon during trapping)	Low	Shobrak per. Comm (interview with falcon' trappers
Trade	Low	Shobrak and Al Faqeh (2017

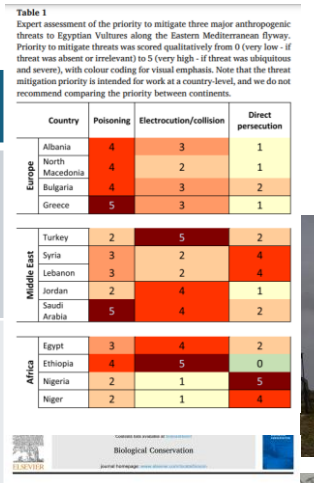


Table 1
Expert assessment of the priority to mitigate three major anthropogenic threats to Egyptian Vultures along the Eastern Mediterranean flyway. Priority to mitigate threats was scored qualitatively from 0 (very low - if threat was absent or irrelevant) to 5 (very high - if threat was ubiquitous and severe), with colour coding for visual emphasis. Note that the threat mitigation priority is intended for work at a country-level, and we do not recommend comparing the priority between continents.

	Country	Poisoning	Electrocution/collision	Direct persecution
Europe	Albania	4	3	1
	North Macedonia	4	2	1
	Bulgaria	4	3	2
	Greece	5	3	1
Middle East	Turkey	2	5	2
	Syria	3	2	4
	Lebanon	3	2	4
	Jordan	2	4	1
	Saudi Arabia	5	4	2
Africa	Egypt	3	4	2
	Ethiopia	4	5	0
	Nigeria	2	1	5
	Niger	2	1	4

Biological Conservation

Major threats to a migratory raptor vary geographically along the eastern Mediterranean flyway

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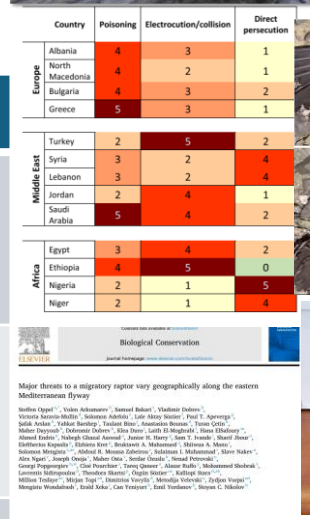

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	Lebanon	3	2	4
	Jordan	2	4	1
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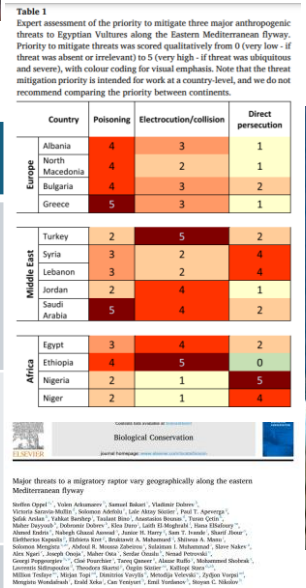

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	Syria	3	2	4
	Lebanon	3	2	4
	Jordan	2	4	1
	Saudi Arabia	5	4	2
Africa	Egypt	3	4	2
	Ethiopia	4	5	0
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Threats

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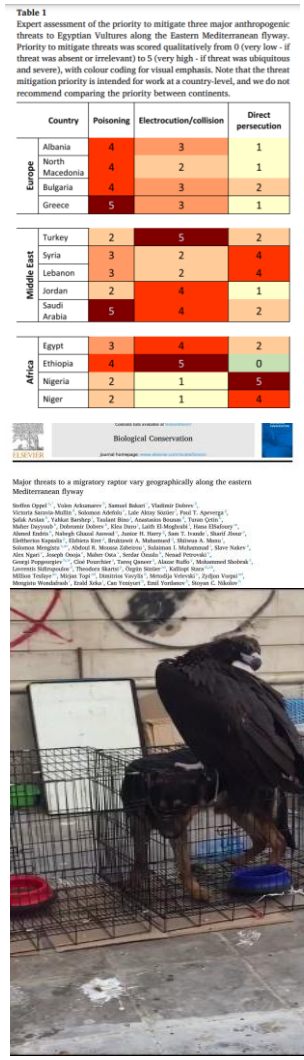

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	Jordan	2	4	1
	Saudi Arabia	5	4	2
Africa	Egypt	3	4	2
	Ethiopia	4	5	0
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Biological Conservation

Major threats to a migratory raptor vary geographically along the eastern Mediterranean flyway

Conservation Measures

The main objectives of the Steppe Eagle Action Plan

Protect the species

Legislation: Relevant legal framework –

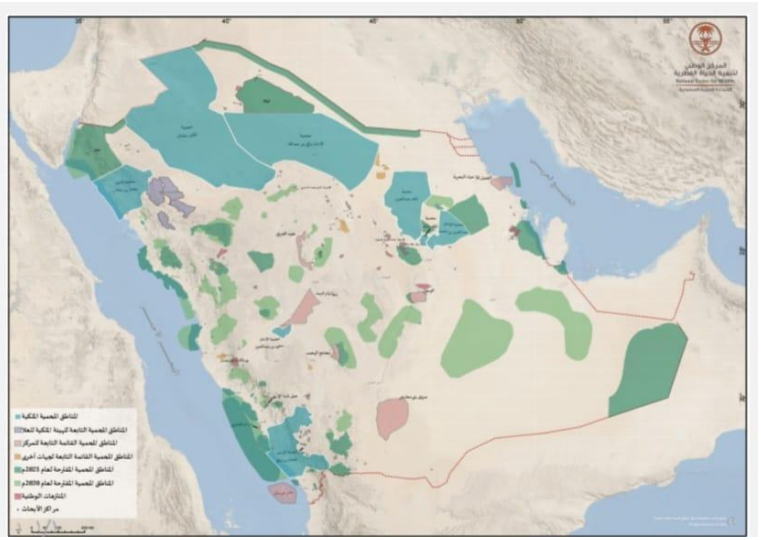
- **The Steppe Eagle is a protected species according to Saudi Executive Regulations. It is also included in the list of High Conservation Priority Species for Saudi Arabia**
  - ✓ **Hunting of Wildlife Terrestrial Species no. 1442/1/312179, Date: 17/1/2021**
  - ✓ **Trade on Wildlife and their Products act no. 1442/1/356344, Date: 8/2/2021**
  - ✓ **Protected Areas act, no. 1443/45/67867, Date: 27/9/2021**

Conservation Measures

The main objectives of the Steppe Eagle Action Plan

Protect the species

- Enforcement on the National-level
  - Established the Special Forces For Environmental Security
- The Protected Areas Network



2016		End of 2025		2030	
Terrestrial	Marian	Terrestrial	Marian	Terrestrial	Marian
4.3%	3.5%	18.1%	16.3%	30%	30%

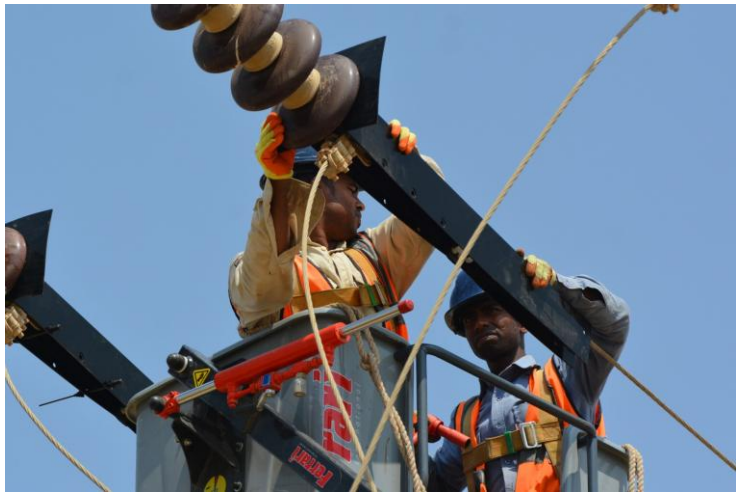
Conservation Measures

The main objectives of the Steppe Eagle Action Plan

Protect the species

Improve knowledge through monitoring and research

- Continue monitoring of the wintering populations in Saudi Arabia
- Coordinate research gaps identified with national, regional and global organizations to implement the ST AP
- Monitoring the Movement of wintering individuals to understand the movements and sites used.
- Work with ministry of Energy to continue find and insulate the dangerous powerlines



Conservation Measures

The main objectives of the Steppe Eagle Action Plan

Protect the species

Improve knowledge through monitoring and research

Exchange lessons learnt and raise awareness

Work with NGO's to develop awareness programs on the importance of protecting the species
Work with the relevant stakeholders for the Best management options for waste

Fahad Al Qethami
Suham Al Asmari
M. McGrady,
B.-U. Meyburg,
N. Sapir, R. Efrat, T. Katzner and T. Miller, O. Hatzofe, Efrat, R. Katzner, T. Miller, Royal Society for Conservation of Nature in Jordan, Kuwait Environmental Lens, Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Science,

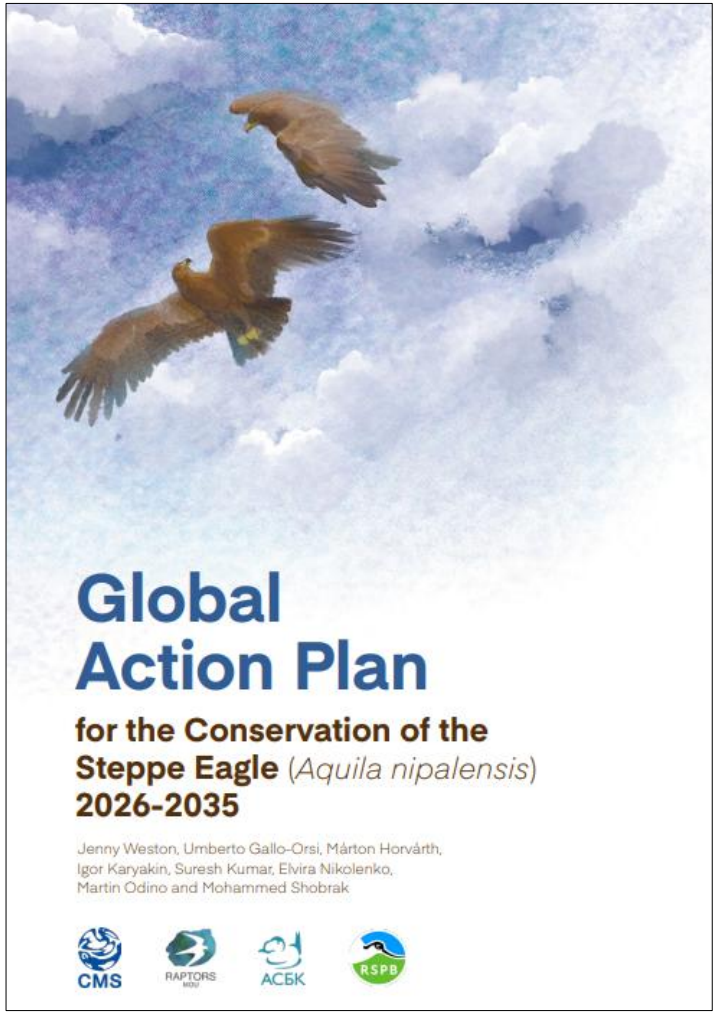
Questions & Discussion

Thankyou

This plan provides the framework for coordinated global action to ensure the survival of one of the most iconic raptors of the Central Asian and East African-Eurasian Flyways.

jenny.weston@rspb.org.uk or cmsoffice.ae@un.org

Scan here for more information about how we can work together



CMS RAPTORS MOU АСБК RSPB MINISTRY OF ECOLOGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN المركز الوطني لتنمية الحياة الفطرية National Center for Wildlife المملكة العربية السعودية