

**FOURTH MEETING OF SIGNATORIES TO THE MEMORANDUM OF
UNDERSTANDING ON THE CONSERVATION OF MIGRATORY BIRDS OF PREY
IN AFRICA AND EURASIA**

(Victoria Falls, 30 November- 2 December 2026)

UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.3

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ANNEX 3, TABLE 3: LIST OF INTERNATIONALLY
IMPORTANT SITES FOR MIGRATORY BIRDS OF PREY IN AFRICA AND EURASIA**

(Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU)

Summary:

This document presents proposed amendments to Annex 3, Table 3 of the Raptors MOU: the List of internationally important sites for migratory birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia ("List of Sites"). The proposed amendments address:

- a correction requested by the United Kingdom;
- consequential changes arising from the taxonomic and nomenclatural matters presented in Document [UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.1](#); and
- a change to the English common name of *Asio otus*.

The Meeting is invited to consider and adopt the proposed amendments and to request the Coordinating Unit to incorporate them into the revised version of Annex 3, Table 3.

Mandate and Rationale for Amendments

1. The present document sets out the amendments to Annex 3, Table 3 proposed by the Technical Advisory Group's (TAG) for consideration by the Fourth Meeting of Signatories (MOS4).
2. The document contributes to the implementation of Action 1 of the TAG workplan 2023-2026:

Ensure that changes in taxonomy and/or conservation status and developments in knowledge concerning the movements of migratory raptors are reflected in the lists under the Raptors MOU.
3. At its third session, the Meeting of Signatories (MOS3) adopted amendments to Annex 3, Table 3. These included taxonomic and nomenclatural updates; the addition of sites, or qualifying populations, relating to species added to Annex 1 at MOS2; and amendments requested by the European Union concerning Special Protection Areas included in the List of Sites.
4. At MOS3, amendments to the TAG proposed list were requested by some Signatories (Denmark, Sweden and United Kingdom) as reported in para 157 of MOS3 report ([UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS3/Report](#)). The version of Table 3 resulting from the decisions taken at MOS3 was otherwise accepted by Signatories.
5. On 22 March 2024, the United Kingdom informed the Coordinating Unit that the published List of Sites contained an error concerning sites UK9009243 and UK9009244. The correction proposed for adoption by MOS4 is set out in paragraph 15(a) below.

Taxonomic and nomenclatural implications for Annex 3, Table 3

6. The following section sets out the amendments to Annex 3, Table 3 proposed by the TAG for consideration by MOS4, arising from the taxonomic and nomenclatural updates presented in Document [UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.1](#).

Yellow-billed kite

7. At MOS3, Signatories agreed to recognise the Yellow-billed Kite (*Milvus aegyptius*) separately from the Black Kite (*Milvus migrans*), following a change in the CMS-adopted taxonomic reference for birds¹. The corresponding amendments were made to Annex 1 and Annex 3, Table 1².
8. During the intersessional period, the TAG intended to determine which sites currently listed in Table 3 for the black kite should instead list Yellow-billed Kite as a qualifying species.
9. As explained in document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.1, BirdLife International and other taxonomic authorities have collaborated in developing AviList, a unified global checklist of the world's birds. The first version of AviList³, published in June 2025, treats *Milvus aegyptius* as conspecific with *Milvus migrans*. BirdLife

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¹ <https://www.cms.int/document/taxonomy-and-nomenclature-4>

² [MOU & Annexes EN.pdf](#)

³ <https://www.avilist.org/>

International intends to align its taxonomic treatment with AvIList⁴. However, this process will take time, as each taxonomic change requires further work to assess the implications for the IUCN Red List classification of newly split, lumped or otherwise revised species.

10. In view of this ongoing alignment process, the TAG recommends that no changes be made at this stage to identify the yellow-billed kite as a qualifying species for individual sites in Table 3. The matter may be reconsidered once the relevant taxonomic treatment has been formally incorporated into the CMS-adopted taxonomic reference.

Cyprus Scops-owl

11. The Cyprus Scops-owl (*Otus cypricus*) is recognised as a species separate from the Eurasian Scops-owl (*Otus scops*) in the CMS-adopted taxonomic reference for birds and in AvIList.
12. As the Cyprus scops-owl is considered non-migratory, it is not proposed for inclusion in Annex 1 of the Raptors MOU. The Eurasian Scops-owl remains included in Annex 1. The TAG therefore recommends removing the Eurasian Scops-owl as a qualifying species from the ten sites listed for Cyprus in Table 3. Eight of these sites qualify on the basis of other listed species and would therefore remain in Table 3. The remaining two sites, for which the Eurasian Scops-owl is the sole qualifying species, would be removed from the List of Sites.
13. The 12 affected sites, including the two sites proposed for removal, are listed in Annex 1 to the present document.

Long-eared Owl

14. As explained in document UNEP/CMS/RAPTORS/MOS4/Doc.14.1, the English common name of *Asio otus* has changed from "Northern long-eared owl" to "long-eared owl" in the CMS-adopted taxonomic reference for birds and in AvIList.
15. The proposed nomenclatural amendment would affect 193 site entries in Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Romania, Spain, and the Syrian Arab Republic. The amendment concerns the English common name only and does not affect the scientific name, taxonomic treatment or qualifying status of the species at those sites.

Action requested

16. The Meeting is invited to:
 - a) Consider and adopt the correction concerning sites UK9009243 and UK9009244 requested by the United Kingdom, namely the reinstatement of site UK9009243 and the removal of site UK9009244;
 - b) Agree that no amendments should be made at this stage to identify the Yellow-billed Kite as a qualifying species for sites in Table 3, pending completion of the relevant taxonomic alignment process;

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⁴ <https://datazone.birdlife.org/about-our-science/taxonomy>

- c) Consider and adopt the removal of Eurasian Scops-owl as a qualifying species from the ten sites listed for Cyprus in Table 3, including the consequential removal of the two sites for which it is the sole qualifying species;
- d) Consider and adopt the replacement of the English common name "Northern Long-eared owl" with "Long-eared Owl" for *Asio otus* throughout Table 3; and
- e) Request the Coordinating Unit to incorporate the amendments adopted by MOS4 into Annex 3, Table 3 and to publish the revised List of Sites following the Meeting.

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Annex 1

List of the 12 sites Table 3 Annex 3 which would be affected by the removal of Eurasian Scops owl (*Otus scops*) as a trigger species within the range of the newly recognised, non-migratory Cyprus Scops owl (*O. cyprius*).

Cyprus Site code	Site name	Qualifying species	Season
21	Pentadaktylos Mountains	Eurasian Scops-owl Peregrine Falcon	breeding breeding
25	Akamas and Agia Aikaterini – Agia Paraskevi Gorges	Eurasian Scops-owl Peregrine Falcon	breeding breeding
26	Pafos Forest	Eurasian Scops-owl	breeding
24486	Karpasia Peninsula - Kleides Islands	Eurasian Scops-owl Pallid Harrier Red-footed Falcon	breeding passage passage
24494	Mahairas Forest – Tzionia	Eurasian Scops-owl	breeding
CY2000015	VOUNOKORFES MADARIS - PAPOUTSAS	Common Kestrel Eurasian Buzzard Eurasian Scops-owl Eurasian Sparrowhawk European Honey-buzzard Griffon Vulture Hen Harrier Long-legged Buzzard Northern Goshawk Osprey Pallid Harrier Peregrine Falcon Western Marsh-harrier Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i> <i>Buteo buteo</i> <i>Otus scops</i> <i>Accipiter nisus</i> <i>Pernis apivorus</i> <i>Gyps fulvus</i> <i>Circus cyaneus</i> <i>Buteo rufinus</i> <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> <i>Circus macrourus</i> <i>Falco peregrinus</i> <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> <i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
CY4000016	FARANGIA AGIAS AIKATERINIS - AGIAS PARASKEVIS	Eurasian Buzzard Eurasian Scops-owl Eurasian Sparrowhawk European Honey-buzzard Hen Harrier	<i>Buteo buteo</i> <i>Otus scops</i> <i>Accipiter nisus</i> <i>Pernis apivorus</i> <i>Circus cyaneus</i>

CY4000021	KOILADA EZOUSAS	Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
		Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
		Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
		Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
		~~Eurasian Scops-owl~~	~~<i>Otus scops</i>~~
		Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
		European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
		Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
		Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
		Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>
		Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
		Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
CY4000022	KREMMOI EZOUSAS	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
		Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
		Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
		~~Eurasian Scops-owl~~	~~<i>Otus scops</i>~~
		Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
		European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
		Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
		Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
		Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>
		Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
		Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
		Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
		Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
		~~Eurasian Scops-owl~~	~~<i>Otus scops</i>~~
CY5000008	PERIOCHI KOILADAS XYLOURIKOU	Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
		Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Northern Goshawk	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>
		Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
		Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
		Eleonora's Falcon	<i>Falco eleonora</i>
CY5000010	ZONI EIDIKIS PROSTASIAS CHA - POTAMI		

CY6000007	POTAMOS PANAGIAS STAZOUSAS	Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
		Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
		~~Eurasian Scops-owl~~	~~<i>Otus scops</i>~~
		Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
		European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
		Griffon Vulture	<i>Gyps fulvus</i>
		Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
		Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Northern Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>
		Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>
		Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
		Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
		Short-toed Snake-eagle	<i>Circaetus gallicus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>
		Eurasian Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>
		Eurasian Hobby	<i>Falco subbuteo</i>
		~~Eurasian Scops-owl~~	~~<i>Otus scops</i>~~
		Eurasian Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>
		European Honey-buzzard	<i>Pernis apivorus</i>
		Hen Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
		Long-legged Buzzard	<i>Buteo rufinus</i>
		Montagu's Harrier	<i>Circus pygargus</i>
		Pallid Harrier	<i>Circus macrourus</i>
		Red-footed Falcon	<i>Falco vespertinus</i>
		Western Marsh-harrier	<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>