



RAPTORS
MOU

MOS 3

Dubai | 3-6 July 2023

**Coming together for the
conservation of birds of prey**



13.2 Conservation of African-Eurasian Vultures

André Botha

Over-arching coordinator CMS Vulture MsAP



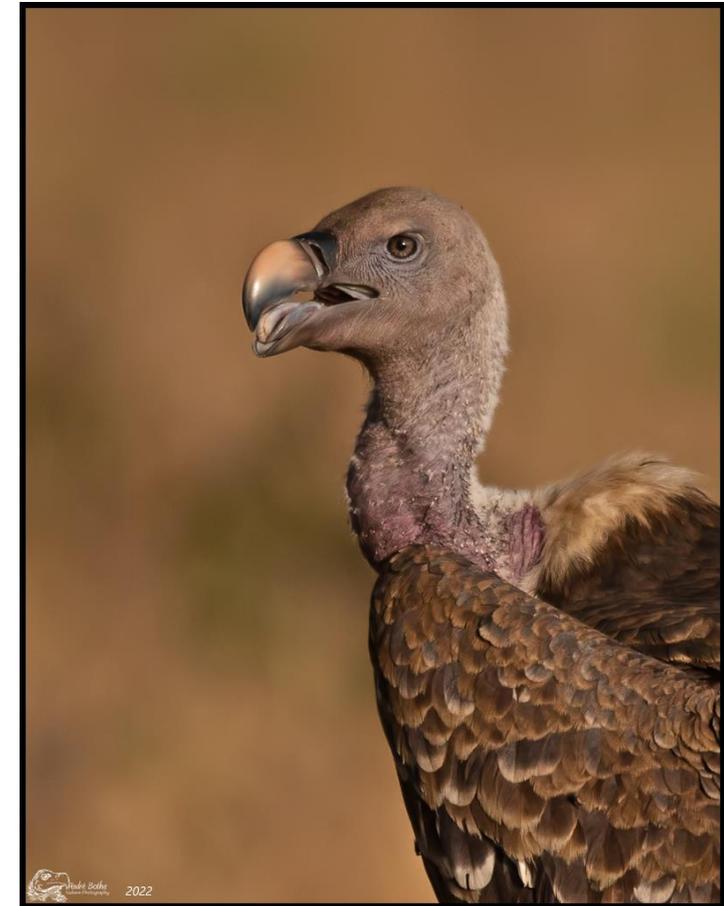
Focus of the Report

- Progress to implement
 - Resolution 12.10 Conservation of African-Eurasian vultures
 - Decisions 13.50 to 13.53 - Conservation of African-Eurasian Vultures
- Proposed draft revisions of Resolution 12. and of Decisions 113.50-13.53



Background

1. The Conference of the Parties at its 12th meeting (COP12, Manila, 2017), adopted Resolution 12.10 Conservation of African-Eurasian vultures in which it:
 - 1. *Adopts* the 12-year Multi-species Action Plan to Conserve African-Eurasian Vultures (Vulture MsAP) 2017-2029, and *urges* Parties and *encourages* non-Party Range States, partners and stakeholders to implement the Vulture MsAP as a matter of priority locally, nationally and regionally as well as at flyway level
 - 5. *Requests* the Secretariat, through the Coordinating Unit of Raptors MOU, to facilitate continuation of the Vulture Working Group and its associated structures (Vulture Steering Group and proposed Regional Implementation Committees) and team of coordinators, subject to the availability of funds



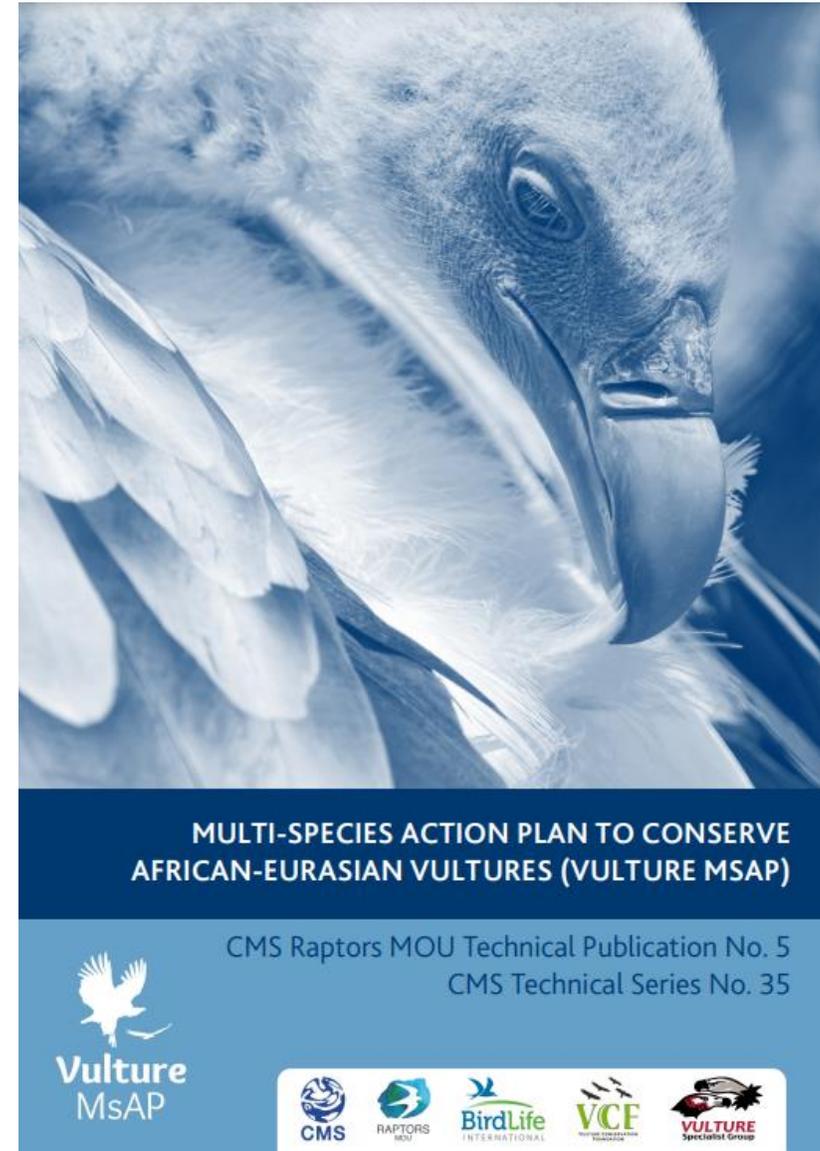
CMS Vulture MsAP Drafting Process



- **October / November 2016** - Regional Workshops in Africa, Europe and Asia
- **January 2017** - 1st Draft Vulture MsAP, incorporating regional components
- **February 2017** – Middle East Regional Workshop
- **February 2017** - Overarching Workshop (Toledo, Spain)
- **Mid-March 2017** – consolidated 2nd Draft Vulture MsAP
- **March / April 2017** - Month-long public consultation exercise
- **April / May 2017** - Comments incorporated into Final Draft Vulture MsAP
- **25 May 2017** - Submit MsAP to CMS Secretariat (COP12 document deadline)
- **July 2017** - Review by CMS Scientific Council at Sessional Committee meeting
- **August 2017** – Publication of MsAP with draft Resolutions on CMS COP12 website
- **October 2017** - Adopted by CMS Parties at COP12 in Manila, Philippines

The CMS Vulture MsAP

1. The Vulture Multi-species Action Plan (MsAP) provides a **strategic conservation plan** covering the **geographic ranges** of all **15 species** of migratory African-Eurasian vultures and promotes concerted, collaborative, and coordinated international actions to save vulture species from further decline and extinction.
2. To address these threats, **12 objectives** are listed in the Vulture MsAP followed by a Framework of Actions that sets out **124 activities** that need to be implemented to meet these challenges.
3. The actions **require involvement and collaboration** between a large range of stakeholders from governments, conservationists, and partner organizations to the general public.



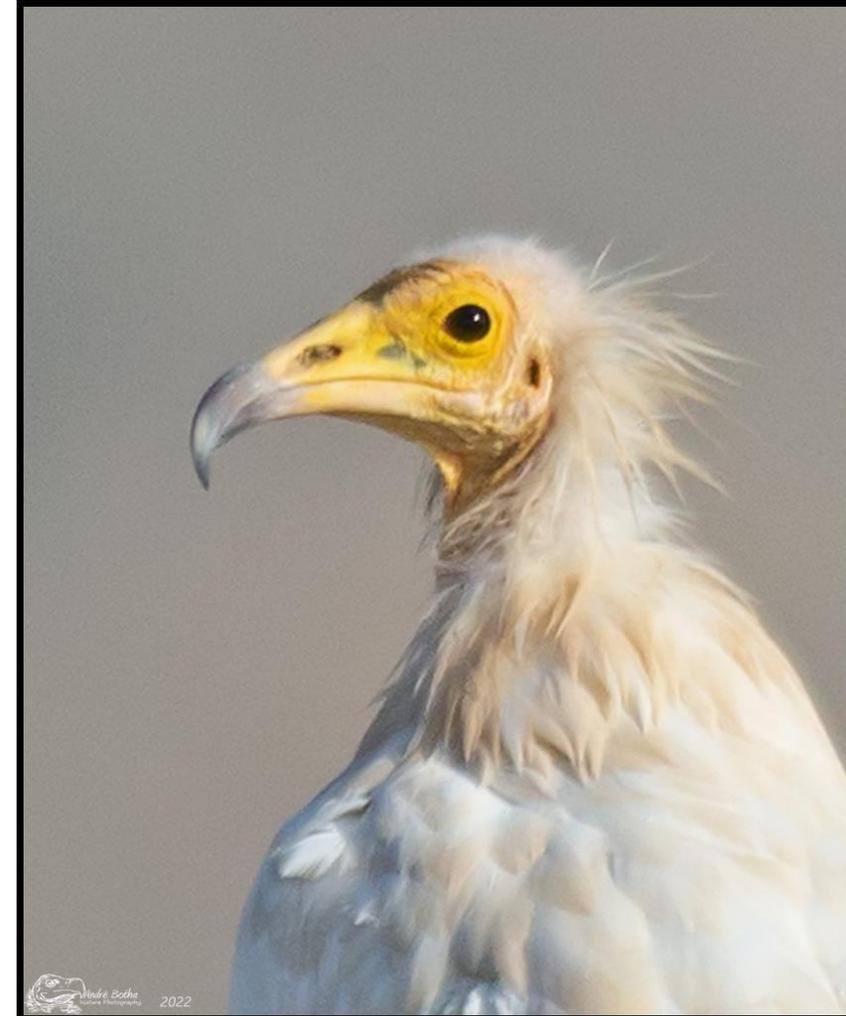
The CMS Vulture MsAP

- Provides information on the **proposed structure, approach, and resources** required for its successful implementation.
- Provides guidance on the **monitoring, evaluation, and review** processes to be followed during the 12-year implementation period. It is envisioned that the plan should be reviewed and updated every six years with a mid-term review in 2023 and a final review in 2029.
- Outlines key components that should be included in **communications and fundraising resource mobilization** plans to promote and garner support for the plan from governments in the Range States and other target audiences.



Existing plans and strategies linked to the MsAP

- Egyptian Vulture FAP (Annex 4)
- Cinereous Vulture FAP (Annex 5)
- Blueprint for the Recovery of Asia's Critically Endangered Gyps Vultures (Annex 6)



MsAP uptake

- Feb 2018 – Questionnaire on completed and planned work (100+ responses)
- April 2018 – Detailed discussion at ‘Global Summit for the Flyways’ – Abu Dhabi
- October 2019 – 1st European Vulture Conference – Symposium promoting implementation – Portugal
- Used as an assessment tool for proposals under the EU Life instrument
- February 2020 – MsAP Strategic Implementation Strategy published
- 2023 - Mid-term implementation review as recommended
- **Despite the mandate of operational paragraph 5 of CMS Resolution 12.10, funding has not been received to support its implementation.**

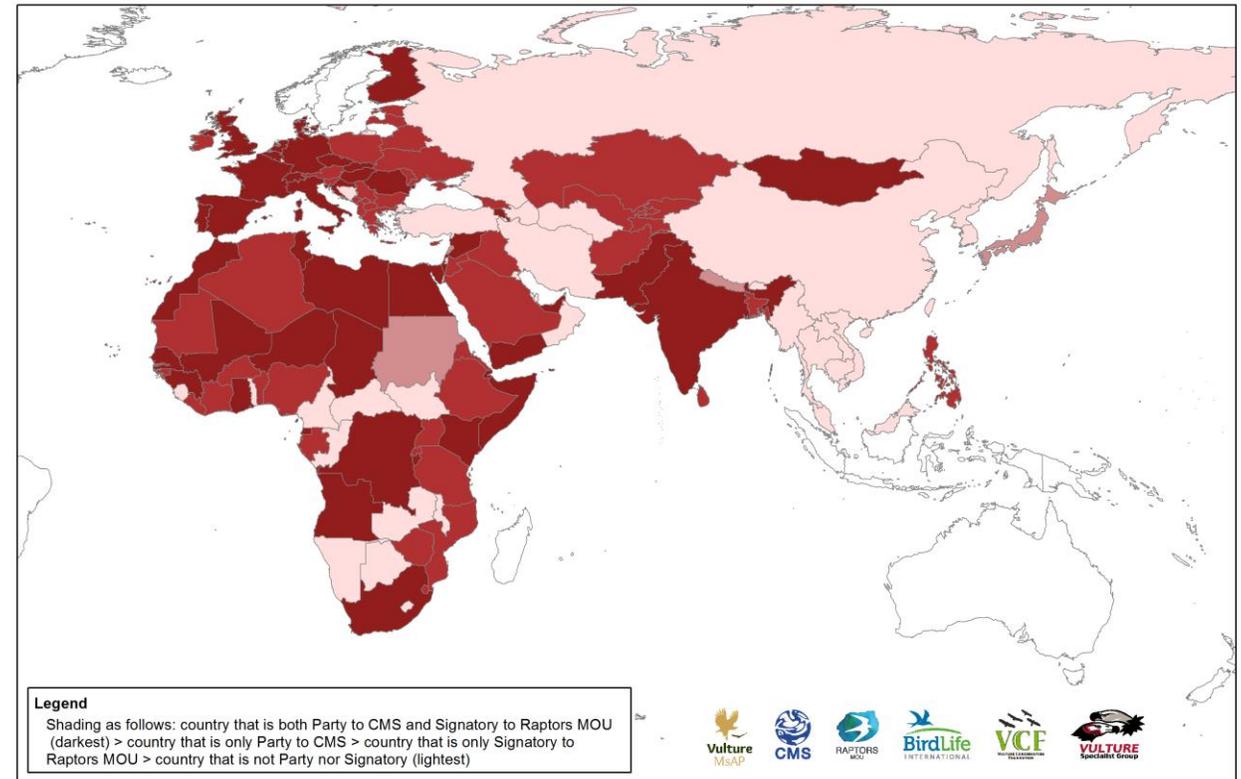


- Current statistics:
- Read 3584 times
- 94 citations
- Research Interest Score – 70.9
- 715 Vulture focused peer-reviewed publications – 2018-2023
- ±28% - focus on African vultures

2023 - Mid-term implementation review

- April 2023 – Questionnaires circulated
- 30 June 2023 -Deadline for submission
- Responses to date:
 - 74 Responses
 - 47/128 range states (36%)
- July 2023 – Follow up with contact points, etc.

Vulture MsAP Range States and Regions



MsAP Uptake

- Significant work to train people in identifying and managing poisoning incidents:
 - Europe Wildlife Crime Academy – 66 learners, 14 countries
 - Africa – 6680 learners, 17 countries
 - Training trainers
 - Expanding training focus and target groups
- Poisoning/mortality databases established for Africa, Europe, the Balkans and the SAVE consortium (Asia)
- NSAIDS – SAVE, bans on diclofenac, etc., safe alternatives, TAG Working Group on NSAIDS
- Lead poisoning – CMS Resolution 11.15 phasing out lead ammunition, recommendations submitted to EU Feb 2023, awaiting decision
- CITES CoP18 - Decisions (18.186-192) improved understanding of belief-use trade impact in West Africa
- CITES Animal Committee Meetings 2020-2023
- Vulture MsAP Coordination Team (EWT, VCF, BLI, RSPB)



West African Vulture Conservation Action Plan (WAVCAP)

- 6 Old World vulture species occur in West Africa
- All are Threatened
- In 2017, the Vulture MsAP identified poisoning (intentional & unintentional) as the most significant threat to these species in West Africa

Workshop to develop a WAVCAP

- Raising concerns by BLI and NCF → organization of workshop in Oct 2022 in Abuja, Nigeria
- Aim: to help RS develop an action plan to address poisoning as a key reason for the species' declines in subregion
- Participation by CMS National Focal Points, CITES National Authorities, other gov. representatives, as well as academia & NGOs

The WAVCAP

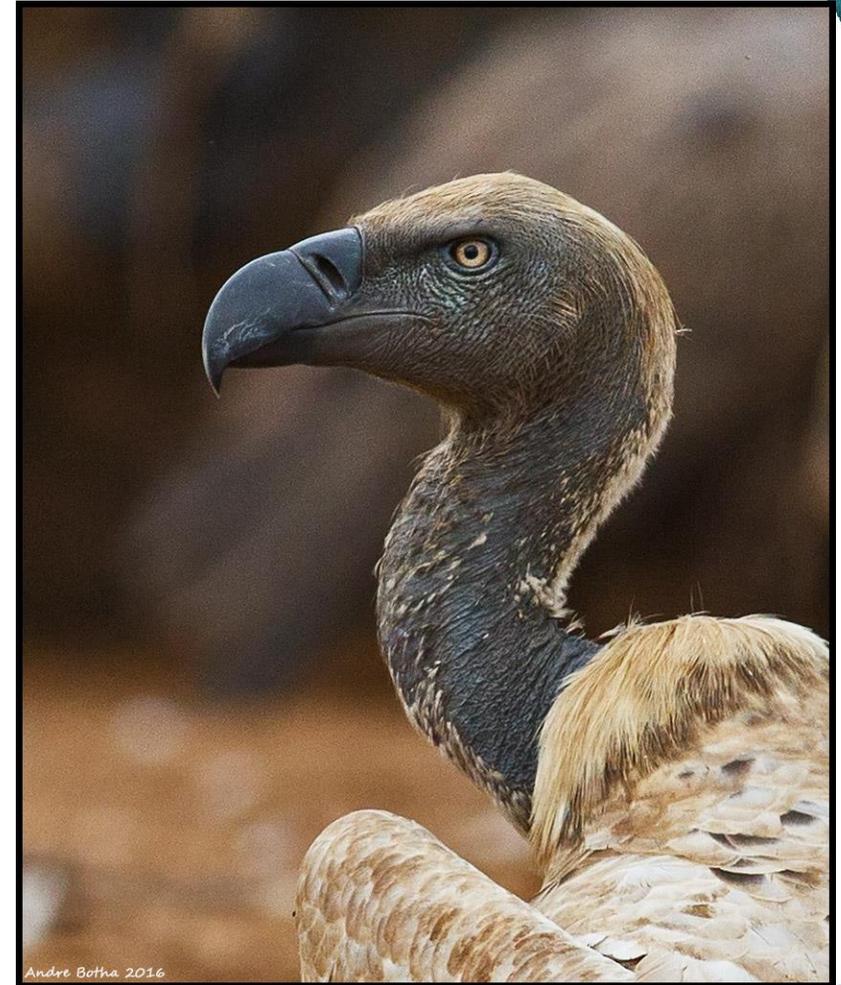
- Workshop participants agreed on 4 main thematic areas to address:
 1. Killing of vultures for belief-based use
 2. Trade and use of vultures for belief-based use
 3. Cultural perceptions and beliefs around vultures
 4. Indirect persecution
- Participants identified a 2043 vision, actions, timelines, responsible stakeholders, & indicators to integrate the WAVCAP

Finalisation of the WAVCAP

- Workshop facilitated by IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group
- Financial contribution by Egyptian Vulture New LIFE Project & Raptors MOU
- Technical contribution by IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group & Raptors MOU
- Final WAVCAP anticipated by the end of 2023

There ARE positives!

- Europe – various successes
 - Positive population trends in most species
 - Significant funding secured for various projects
- Asia – SAVE consortium
- Africa – Cape Vulture downlisted in 2021 - EN → VU



Discussion and analysis

- Significant gaps persist in terms of implementation
- Lack of a formal implementation framework
- Critical need for resources through fundraising –
 - Support coordination
 - Facilitate implementation
- Proposals for amendments to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12)
- Level of implementation of Decision 13.50 (a) is significant, but this has not happened uniformly across the VMsAP and more work is required.
- New decisions are required to guide the Parties and other stakeholders toward the implementation of the Vulture MsAP
- Addressing, in cooperation with CITES, the conservation of Vultures in West Africa addressing belief-based use

Actions(s) requested

The meeting is invited to:

- a) take note of the circulated report;
 - b) adopt the draft amendments to Resolution 11.16 (Rev.COP12) contained in Annex 1 of this document;
 - c) adopt the draft Decisions contained in Annex 2 of this document, that amend Decisions 13.50, 13.52 and 13.53
 - d) delete Decision 13.51
- adopt the new draft Decisions contained in Annex 2

Thank you for your attention

André Botha

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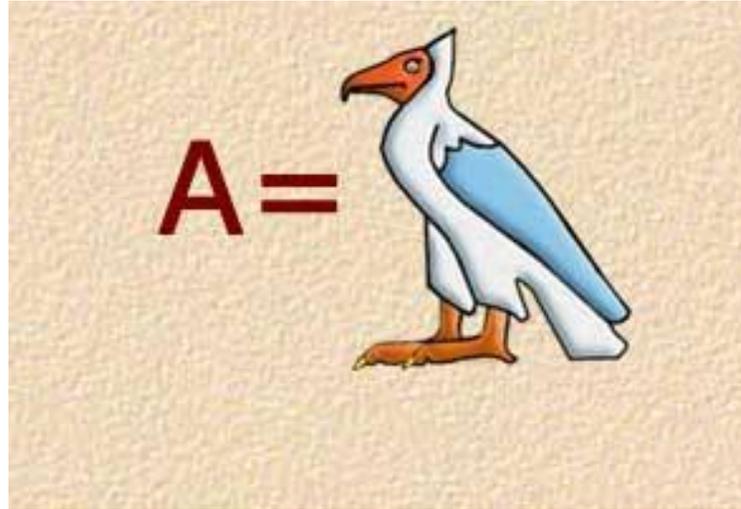
Egyptian Vulture New LIFE

Flyway Conservation

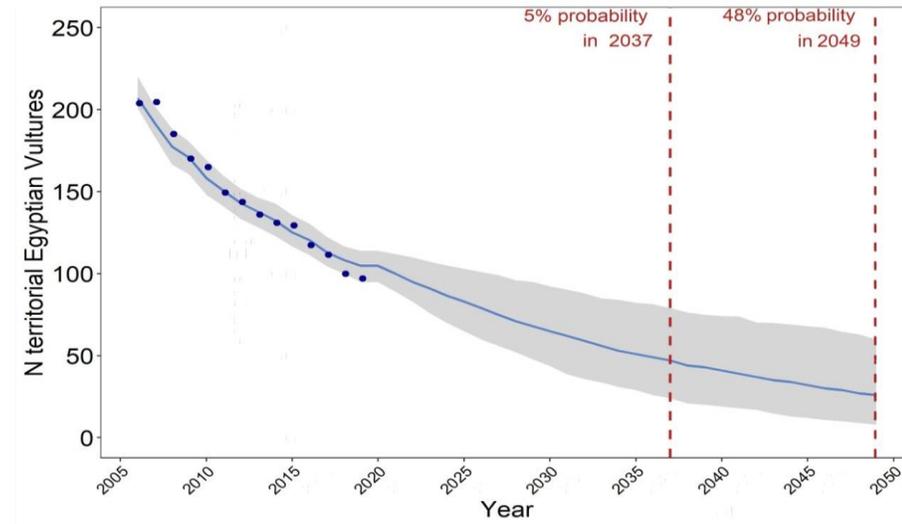
Dr Vladimir Dobrev
Conservation Officer
BSPB | Birdlife Bulgaria



Living legend or a symbol from the past?



80% population decline in the Balkans over the past 30 years

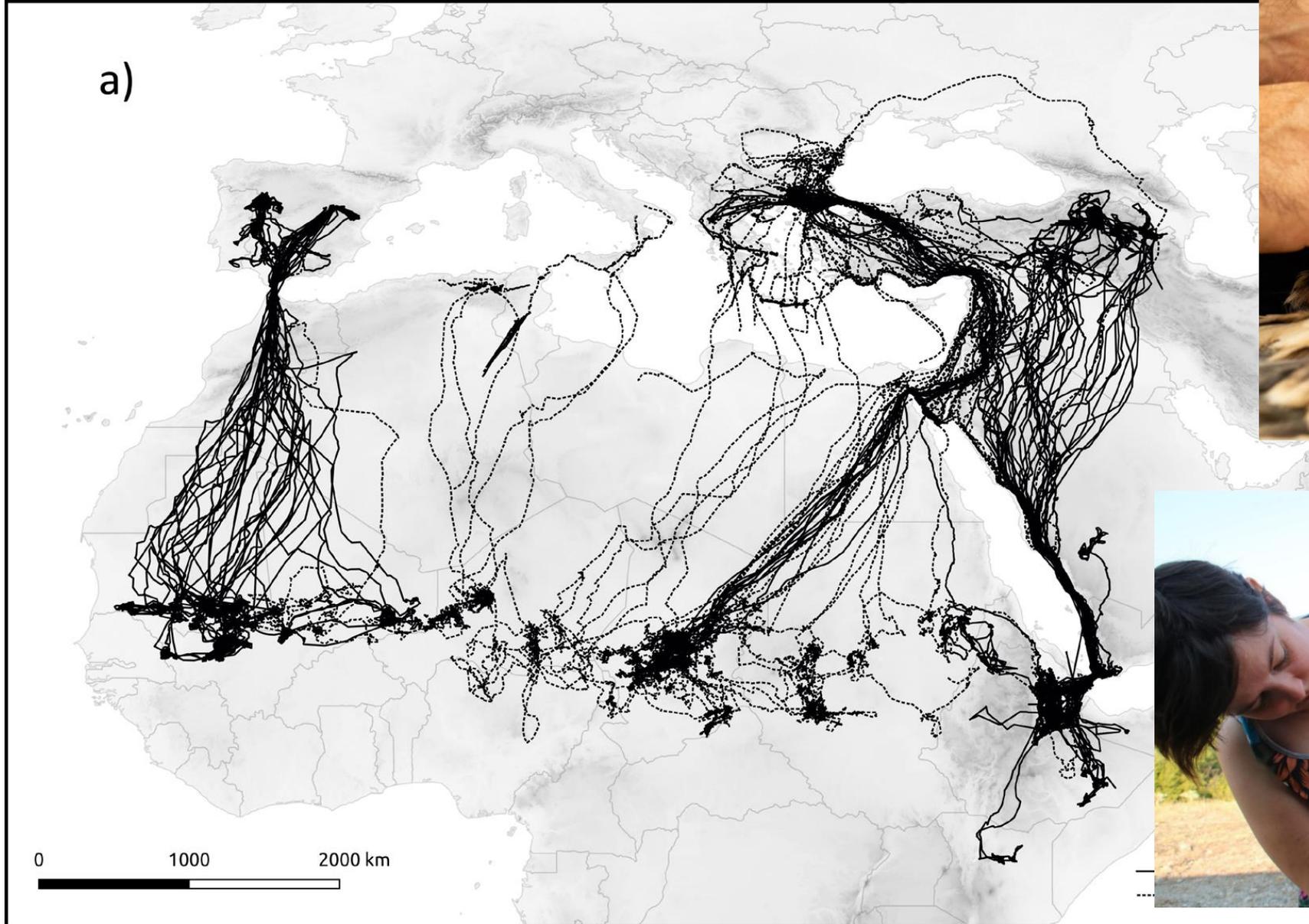


International alliance along the Egyptian Vulture flyway

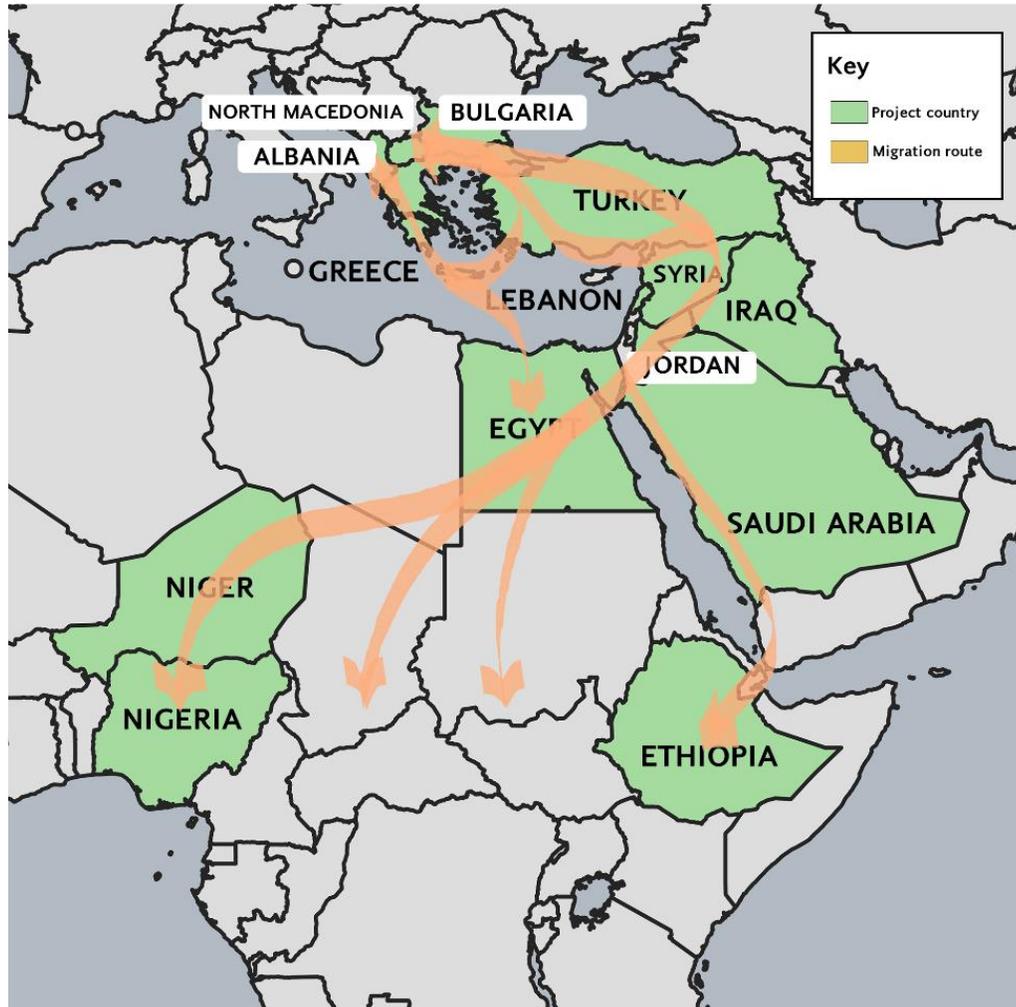
- ✂ International team – 3 continents – 14 countries – 22 partners
- ✂ International networking – build trust, share experience, achieve impact beyond borders
- ✂ Evidence based conservation
- ✂ Establish collaboration with local authorities – underline international importance
- ✂ Find “stars” and share their stories – touch the public and decision-makers



Satellite telemetry as a powerful tool



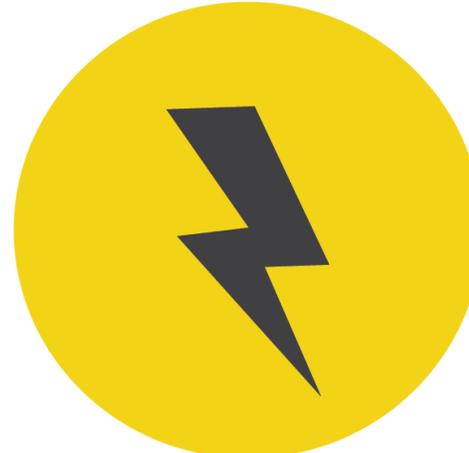
Main threats along the Flyway



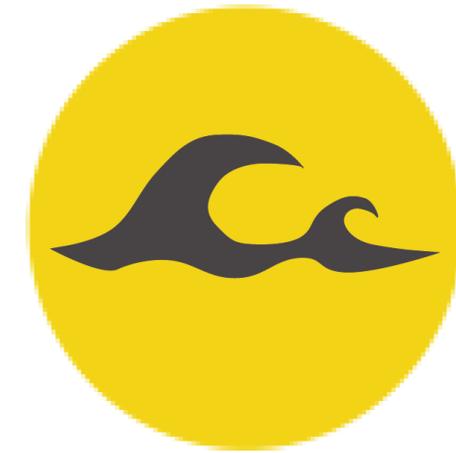
Poisoning



Direct persecution and trafficking



Electrocution and collisions with energy infrastructure



Water barriers

Addressing threats to the Egyptian Vulture

- Poisoning



Addressing threats to the Egyptian Vulture

- Electrocutation



Addressing threats to the Egyptian Vulture

- Poaching and belief-based use



SHOT ON HOT ZONE
AI Quad Lens



Conservation strategy and restocking the Balkan population



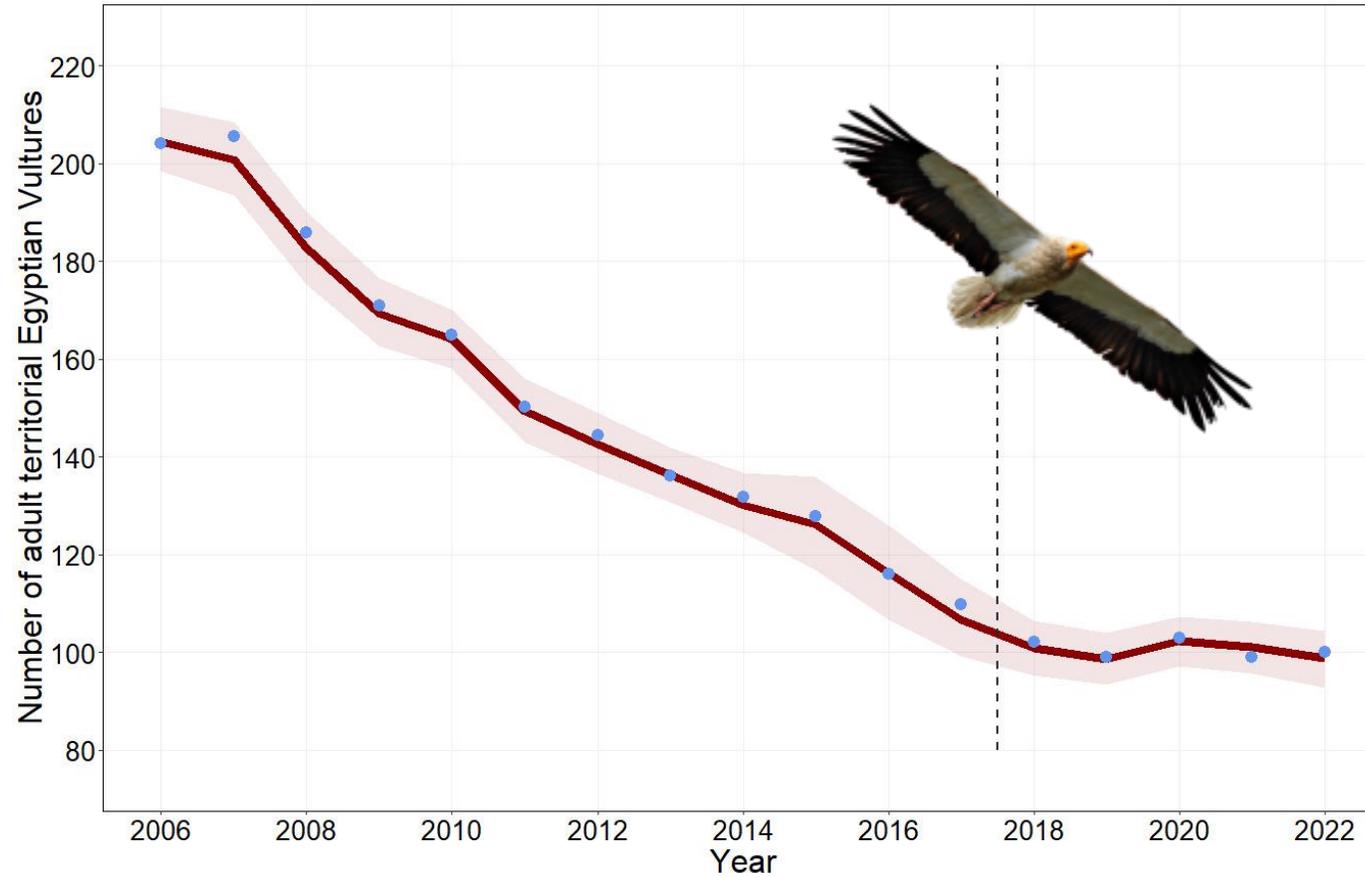
Building support and sharing our message

A Mile for the Egyptian Vulture

- 7 countries
- 50 000 people run for the Egyptian Vulture
- > 5 million people reached



First signs of population stabilization?





Flyway Action Plan for the Conservation of the Balkan and Central Asian populations of Egyptian Vulture - Mid-term implementation review

Jenny Weston

Senior Species Recovery Officer

RSPB | Birdlife UK



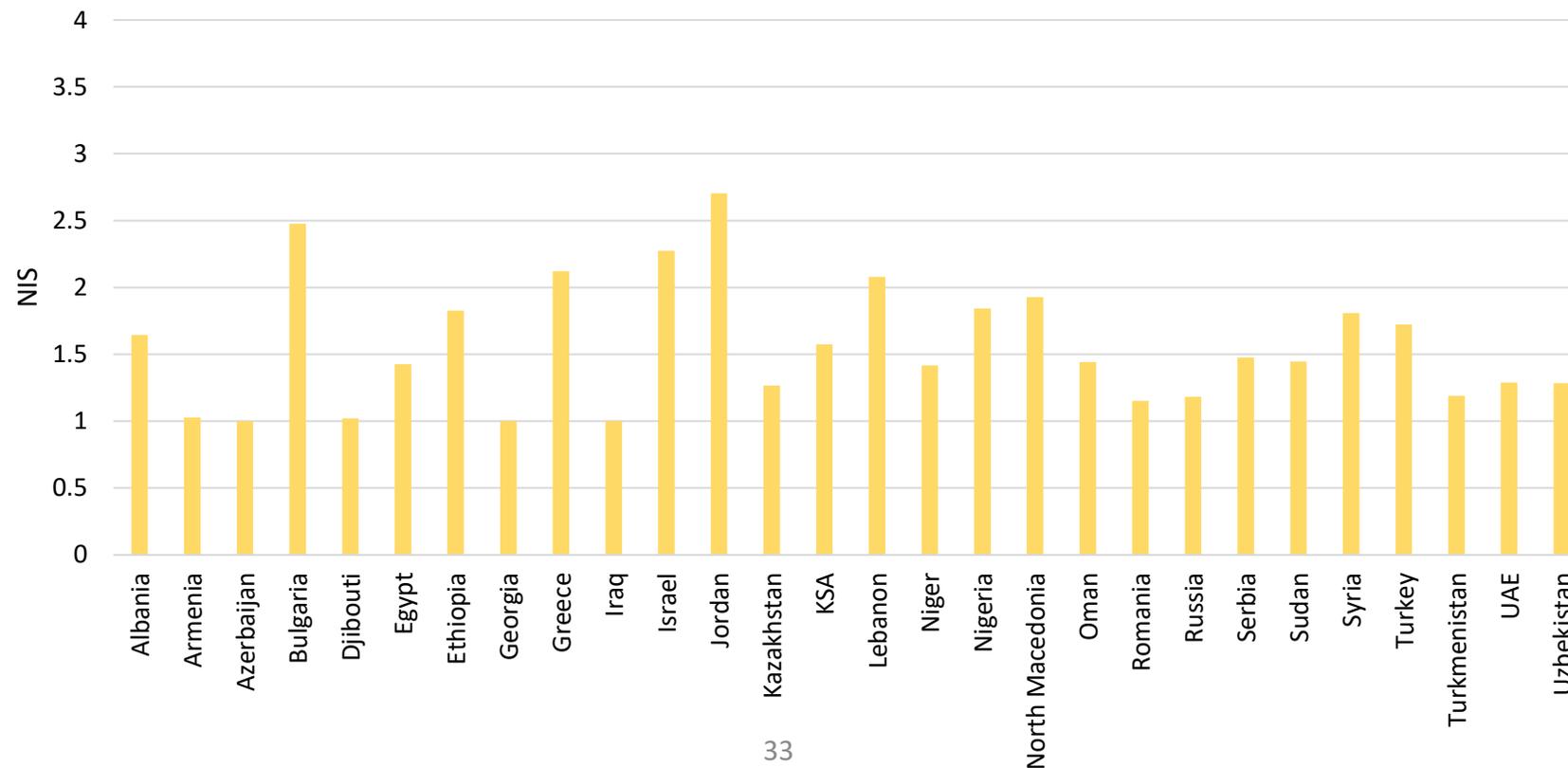
EVFAP



- 33 countries
- Framework for action featuring 59 Actions within 5 Expected Results
- Method of scoring actions for implementation and combining with priority to give Action Priority Index (API)
- Utilised online questionnaires, workshop and draft consultation

Results

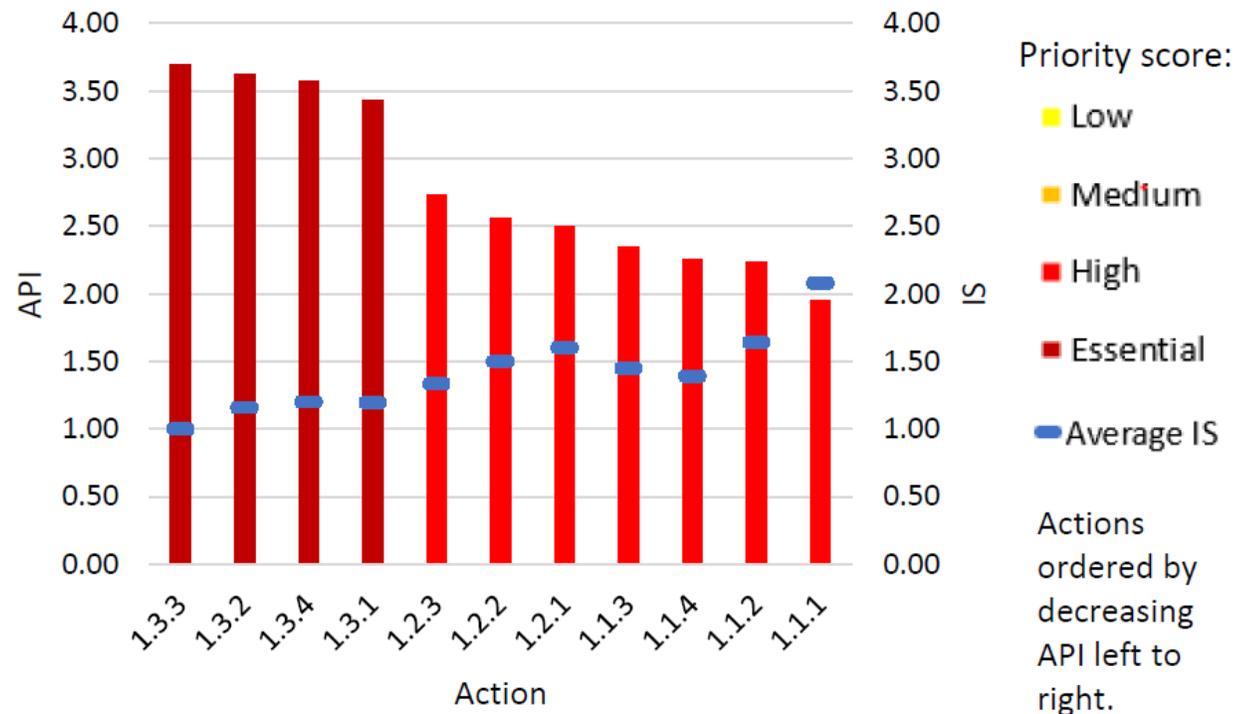
- Responses were received from 29 of the countries on the flyway
- Average National Implementation Score is 1.56 for the whole flyway



Key areas with highest API

- Some additional scoring recommended as threats in each region more fully understood now e.g. energy infrastructure in Central Asia
- The priority of actions was also adapted along the flyway
- The highest scoring actions here are those requiring legislative change

Expected Result 1 – anti-poison work



Status change

- No new or emerging threats identified
- Some changes in NSAP status and national policies
- 20 new key sites across the range, including new globally important spring migration monitoring site in Egypt
- Updated and refined breeding populations available for some countries, including confirmation of extinction in Serbia and Romania
- Breeding population in the Balkans is showing signs of stabilisation after long term and serious decline.

Financial and other feedback

- The minimum amount spent on implementation of EVFAP in the first 5 years is €3.2 million
- Most of this funding comes from:
 - European Union's LIFE program
 - Global Environment Fund (GEF)
 - MAVA Foundation
 - Core NGO funds
- We have provided targeted information sheets for each country

Bulgaria
National Implementation Score 2.48

Action	PS	IS	Description	API
1.1.1	3	4	Adapt common survey methods and protocols, enhance exchange of information and know-how, and increase capabilities for monitoring. Investigate the motives for illegal poison use.	0
1.1.2	3	4	Establish a centralized database to store systematic data on mortality, poison use and toxicology analyses	0
1.1.3	3	2	Establish specialized toxicology labs with qualified personnel where feasible.	2
1.1.4	3	2	Study the effect of NSAIDs and lead poisoning on health status and population productivity.	2
1.2.1	3	3	Introduce Anti-poison dog patrols in key sites for the species.	1
1.2.2	3	3	Introduce dedicated Wildlife Crime Units in relevant authorities. Incentivize reporting and successful persecution violation.	1
1.2.3	3	2	Increase the use of preventative measures to reduce wildlife conflicts with livestock [e.g. shepherd dogs, fences, etc.]. Where appropriate, introduce wildlife damage compensation schemes.	2
1.3.1	4	1	Strengthen the control of agro-chemicals on the market (nationally) and at the individual farms (locally). Introduce amnesty for handling over illegal pesticides in stock.	4
1.3.2	4	1	Improve the control over pest control measures.	4
1.3.3	4	1	Penalize land owners/managers when poisoning incidents occur on their land.	4
1.3.4	4	1	Strengthen legal control over the use of poisonous substances in line with the CMS Resolution 11.15 and Bern Convention.	4
2.1.1	2	1	Improve survey methods and protocols for monitoring illegal killing. Maintain adequate records and exchange information.	2
2.1.2	2	1	Improve understanding of motivation of illegal shooters in order to develop adequate response actions [e.g. awareness raising, stakeholder engagement, etc.]	2
3.1.1	3	4	Adopt common survey methods and protocols for monitoring electrocution and collision with power infrastructure. Organize regular exchange of knowhow and information among utility companies.	0
3.1.2	3	4	Collect and analyse evidence on mortality due to electrocution and collisions [incl. online database, pre- and post- implementation assessments] and publish results.	0
3.1.3	3	1	Identify migration bottleneck and congregation sites. Produce sensitivity maps for wind farm and powerline siting; map, assess and prioritize the powerlines and wind farms for electrocution and collision risks.	3
3.1.4	3	1	Identify appropriate mitigation measures [incl. explore new approaches] to reduce collision and	3

Recommendations

- More involvement of governments
- **Ongoing monitoring** in breeding areas and migration bottlenecks
- **Awareness raising is given equal standing** compared to on the ground conservation actions and supported financially
- The threat of the **illegal killing of birds is often very specific and localised** and therefore the priority given to these actions should be adaptive.
- **Collaborative working** to attract funding
- **Sharing of best practice**
- The **API figures produced here should drive work** going forward

Thank you for your attention



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