

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

(Dubai, 3-6 July 2023)

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**REPORTING BY SIGNATORIES AND COOPERATING PARTNERS: SYNTHESIS OF THE
RESULTS OF A TRIAL RUN USING THE PROPOSED FUTURE REPORTING FORMAT**

(Prepared by the Coordinating Unit of the Raptors MOU)

Summary: This document presents a synthesis of national reports submitted by Signatories and Cooperating Partners on their implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan during the period from July 2019 to October 2021.

Contents

0. Summary
1. Background and introduction
2. Reporting period covered by this synthesis
3. Overall response rate
4. Lessons learnt about the process
5. High level key messages
6. Raptor conservation strategies and equivalent documents
7. Legal protection of species against killing and unsustainable exploitation
8. Species population management and recovery programmes
9. Conservation and management of habitats and sites
10. Assessing and responding to threats and pressures
11. Action / integration across sectors
12. Research, monitoring and information management
13. Awareness and education
14. Strengthening capacity
15. International cooperation

0. Summary

This document presents a synthesis of national reports submitted by Signatories and Cooperating Partners on their implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan during the period from July 2019 to October 2021.

A process of regular reporting is foreseen in the MOU Text but has not been thoroughly implemented to date. To address this, at the request of the Second Meeting of Signatories (MOS2, Trondheim, October 2015), the Technical Advisory Group developed a proposal for a standard reporting format, which is now proposed for adoption at the present meeting.

In advance of that anticipated adoption, the opportunity was taken to issue the reporting format on a trial basis, and to invite its use for reporting on a voluntary basis in late 2021. One third of Signatories responded to this request and submitted reports. All four relevant Cooperating Partners did the same.

The reports received provide rich information on Signatories and Cooperating Partners' implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan during the period spanning July 2019 to October 2021. In addition to reporting on actions foreseen in the MOU and Action Plan, respondents summarised their perceptions of the most successful aspects of implementation, greatest challenges faced, and top priorities for future action. These "high level key messages" have highlighted the importance of measures concerning legislation, policies, strategies and plans, which were also the areas of greatest positive progress.

Constraints relating to resources and capacity were the most cited implementation difficulties experienced by Signatories. Equally prominent were difficulties concerning governance and cooperation, including both integration across sectors and harmonisation internationally of different national approaches. Cooperating Partners expressed concern about levels of political will, and the relatively limited profile of the Raptors MOU compared with broader biodiversity agendas.

Significant challenges relating to threats have been detailed, particularly electrocution, poisoning, and other forms of deliberate killing. At the same time, some progress has been made on these issues, often driven by species action plans; and there are several success stories of species reintroductions.

Remaining sections of the synthesis present an updated picture (for those Signatories and Cooperating Partners who responded) of implementation action and reflections relating to topics including raptor conservation strategies, legislation, species recovery programmes, habitat protection, responses to threats, sectoral integration, research, awareness, capacity and cooperation.

The trial reporting experience has generated suggestions on the way that Signatories and Cooperating Partners' reporting might be refined in future, and these suggestions are noted in this report.

It is hoped that this body of work will comprise the foundation of a systematic reporting process for the Raptors MOU that will enable the evaluation of progress, discerning of trends, and planning of priorities on a consistent and informed basis in future.

1. Background and introduction

Since the Raptors MOU came into effect, there have been *ad hoc* questionnaire enquiries by the Coordinating Unit on aspects of the MOU's implementation (see document [UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS3/Inf.1](#), section 2), but no systematic process of regular reporting by Signatories and Cooperating Partners has yet been adopted to enable the evaluation of implementation progress, the discerning of trends, and the planning of future priorities on a consistent basis.

Paragraph 15 of the MOU called for the first session of the Meeting of Signatories to adopt a format for Signatories to report on a regular basis on the implementation of their raptor conservation strategies or equivalent measures. Given that only a limited number of such strategies had been developed, reporting processes were not addressed in detail until MOS2.

Paragraph 16 of the MOU further provides that the Coordinating Unit will prepare an overview of progress in the implementation of the MOU's [Action Plan](#), prior to each session of the Meeting of Signatories. In addition, section 8 of the Action Plan states that the Action Plan, after coming into effect on the same date as the MOU, shall be valid for a period of seven years. Section 8 also provides for the Action Plan to be reviewed at least two years prior to its expiry date. The review only took place several years later than foreseen, and its findings were published in 2020 (see document [Review of the Raptors MOU Action Plan](#)).

Inputs to the review included the various questionnaire surveys mentioned above, including an extensive one undertaken in 2019 which covered similar ground to the proposed format for MOU national reports that was developed subsequently, as described below. The review (drawing on information from before the First Meeting of Signatories [MOS1, Abu Dhabi, December 2012] and up to September 2019) and the present synthesis document (drawing on information from July 2019 to October 2021) can therefore be taken together to be a combined fulfilment of the "overview of progress" provided for in MOU paragraph 16.

MOS2 tasked the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to develop a suitable format for National Reports, extending the idea from reporting on national strategies or equivalent measures (as in paragraph 15 of the MOU) to cover implementation of the MOU and its Action Plan as a whole.

The TAG duly addressed this at its Third (TAG3, Sempach, December 2018) and Fourth Meetings (TAG4, online, December 2021), and with the support of the Coordinating Unit developed a format for reporting by Signatories and Cooperating Partners. The two formats have been prepared in alignment with the revised versions of the MOU and Action Plan which are tabled for consideration at the present meeting (see document [UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS3/Doc.14.4](#)), and which result from the review of the Action Plan mentioned above. The structure of the findings presented here therefore matches the anticipated future structure of the MOU and Action Plan.

In common with analogous reporting processes in other instruments, a key consideration has been to strike a balance between generating sufficient information to meet monitoring and adaptive management needs, and limiting the burden of reporting. Efforts have been made to keep the information focused on a selection of key “headline” issues. The questionnaires contained 33 questions in 12 sections. Apart from the section concerning respondent contact details, results for all the questions are presented in this synthesis. Attention has also been given to efficiency and coherence between reporting systems within the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) “Family” of instruments and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements, *inter alia* by using compatible question formulations and information handling processes.

The reporting formats in their proposed form were made available in early September 2021 to Signatories (in English and French) and to Cooperating Partners, inviting them to compile reports using the new formats *on a provisional basis* and to submit these via the CMS-hosted Online Reporting System (ORS) by an end of October deadline. Given the extra time requested by some respondents and the re-scheduling of MOS3, a number of late submissions were accepted, and they have been included in the analysis that follows.

The reports that were submitted, and the synthesis of results that is presented here, are therefore based on a voluntary arrangement, rather than a requirement specified in a mandate from the MOS. They nevertheless constitute a very valuable “trial run” of the reporting process that MOS3 is being invited to institute more formally for the future. This has the twin benefits of generating an updated implementation overview for MOS3 to consider, and testing the proposed future approach to validate its utility and allow for any refinements if necessary.

All those who responded willingly on this voluntary basis are warmly acknowledged for the valuable information they have contributed.

The formats were furthermore constructed to follow a similar approach to that taken in the 2019 questionnaire survey that informed the Action Plan Review referred to above. This has enabled a degree of comparability on various issues between the information provided for the 2019 survey and the information provided in the 2021 trial (and in due course, if the reporting process proposals at the present meeting are agreed, with information reported to the MOS in future). Despite its status as a voluntary trial, therefore, the present synthesis should provide a valuable “real data” contribution to perspectives on progress in implementation of the MOU.

While the present document provides a summary of the information submitted, the individual Signatory and Cooperating Partner reports themselves (many of them with additional accompanying documentation) constitute a rich information resource that may find various other uses. This should be encouraged, and the reports have been made publicly accessible online for this purpose (see section on National Reports on the [MOS3 webpage](#)).

2. Reporting period covered by this synthesis

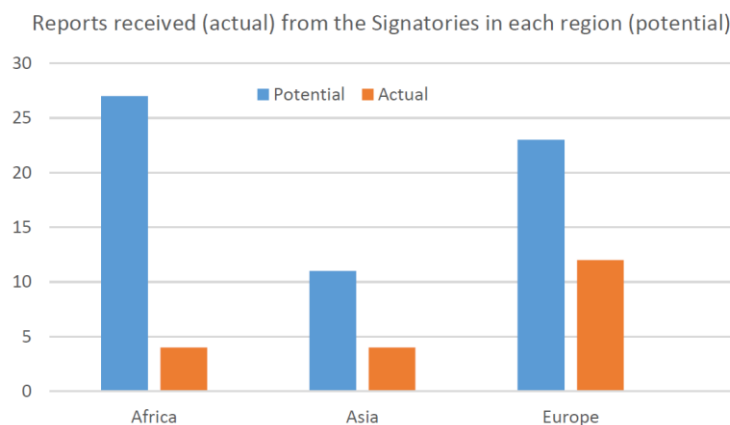
The present report summarises the information submitted by Signatories and Cooperating Partners via the ORS as part of a trial exercise conducted by the Coordinating Unit to test out the operability of new reporting formats. Signatories and Cooperating Partners were invited to submit information on the implementation of the MOU pertaining to the period between July 2019 to October 2021. However, it is possible that some information reported by Signatories and Cooperating Partners may have referred to a wider period.

3. Overall response rate

Responses in the present trial were received from 20 Signatories (see Annex), representing 33% of the 61 countries that were Signatories at the time of the survey. Not all respondents answered every question, and the figures for the individual questions are given separately in each section that follows. Whilst it is hoped that response rates will be higher in a formally adopted reporting process, the present response rate provides for interim conclusions.

The division of Signatory respondents by region is shown in Figure 1 below. Out of 27 African Signatories, four submitted reports; of 11 Asian Signatories, four; and of 23 European Signatories, 12.

Figure 1: Responses received from Signatories from each region.



Responses were also received from four of the MOU's five Cooperating Partners (BirdLife International, the International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey, the International Union for Conservation of Nature Species Survival Commission's [IUCN SSC] Vulture Specialist Group, and The Peregrine Fund). The CMS Secretariat, as the fifth Cooperating Partner, submits its reports directly to the Meetings of Signatories and of the Technical Advisory Group.

4. Lessons learnt about the process

The analysis of information submitted by Signatories and Cooperating Partners as part of the trial exercise generated suggestions on the way that reporting might be refined in future. A brief overview of these lessons learnt is presented below.

Response rate

One third of the countries that were Signatories at the time of the survey returned a response. In future formal reporting cycles, it would be desirable that all Signatories report, and efforts may be made to encourage this.

Submission period

Respondents were initially given approximately two months to submit their reports. Following some requests, the deadline was extended, and the last report arrived around four months after the launch of the survey. It is uncertain whether an even longer period would have improved the response rate. Giving too short a period may challenge some respondents. On the other hand, offering too long a period may risk the task being pushed down a list of priorities and forgotten. A balance needs to be struck in this respect.

Completeness of responses

Not all respondents answered every question. It would be helpful in future to encourage full responses. Where a particular question is not applicable for some reason, or where information is not available for a given question, it is preferable for this to be indicated (most questions offer a “not known” option to cover this latter situation).

Further, in a few cases, the analysis was complicated by respondents who answered a question only by saying “see above” without indicating where that meant, who mistakenly entered their answers in the wrong section of the form, or who did not address the question asked. Guidance in future might urge close attention to these aspects.

Period of information reported

Not all respondents followed the instruction to relate the information provided to the specified implementation period to be covered by the reports. Where it was clear that any information related to earlier years, it was excluded the present analysis, but there may be other information where dates were not supplied that similarly goes beyond the required period. It would be important to emphasize the instruction in this regard in future guidance.

Coherence and consistency of responses

In a few cases a respondent answered “no” to a question but then gave details that made clear that their answer should have been “yes”, or *vice-versa*. Where such situations were clearly apparent, an adjustment has been made to the numerical summaries accordingly. Respondents might be advised in future to pay particularly careful attention to consistency issues of this kind in their answers.

In the general “high level key messages” section (section 5), the suggested future priorities that were reported by Signatories did not always closely match their reported implementation difficulties. Respondents could be urged to ensure reporting consistency in future, or to explain the reasons for any mis-matches.

A few references were made to activities undertaken in relation to raptor species that are not migratory, and hence beyond the scope of the MOU. Some of these have been noted in the account that follows, but it might be preferable to advise in future that such information should be excluded from the reports.

Supporting alignment and options for comparative analysis between MOU and CMS reports

Given the alignment between some questions of the present reporting format with those of the CMS national reports, it has been possible to compare some of the information reported in the present reporting exercise (reporting period: July 2019 to October 2021) and that reported by CMS Parties to the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties to CMS (COP13, Gandhinagar, February

2020; reporting period: April 2017 to August 2019). A future benefit of this may be the possibility of a more integrated or streamlined approach to compiling reports within countries where similar issues are being considered, such as species recovery initiatives, research innovations or awareness campaigns that have a particular focus on migratory birds of prey. For example, a more integrated or streamlined approach may be achieved if relevant information reported in CMS reports could be automatically incorporated into Raptors MOU reports and *vice-versa*.

Points to consider in relation to individual questions in the reporting format

In a few of the individual sections of the synthesis report that follows, some observations are included on possible small refinements that might be considered for the questions, in light of the emerging results. These cover the following:

- Providing guidance on the relationship between the scope of the question on strategies and equivalent documents (section 6) and the question on species action plans (section 8.1);
- Providing for information on exceptions to legal protection (section 7);
- Allocating deliberate and unintentional poisoning appropriately in the list of threats and pressures (section 10);
- Possibly making the question on environmental assessments more focused (section 10.2);
- Possibly offering a tabular structure for the question on raptor population status and trends assessments (section 12.1);
- Possibly making the question on knowledge exchange platforms more focused (section 12.5);
- Rephrasing the question about the impact of awareness activities in a more specific way (section 13.1);
- Providing guidance on the distinction between “education” (section 13) and “training” (section 14); and
- Providing a list of non-Signatory Range States, to assist with the question on encouraging new Signatories (section 15.2).

5. High level key messages

This section of the reporting format contained three questions about high level key messages. It invited respondents to summarise the most important positive aspects of the Raptors MOU/Action Plan implementation in their country (Signatories) or area of operation (Cooperating Partners), and to identify the areas of greatest concern, with recommendations for the future. Answers were intended to be based on the information contained in the body of the report (relating to the defined reporting period), and to distil that information into a brief and simple “high level” message for decision-makers and wider audiences.

The three questions in this section invited free-text answers. Aggregated categories were used to assist in summarising the highly variable responses received. These categories are those used in document [UNEP/CMS/COP13/Doc.20](#) that analyses the CMS national reports submitted to CMS COP13. Using these same categories enables comparing information reported for raptors in the geographical area covered by the MOU with that reported for migratory species as a whole at global level. The categories are not mutually exclusive, so some of the information provided is relevant to more than one category.

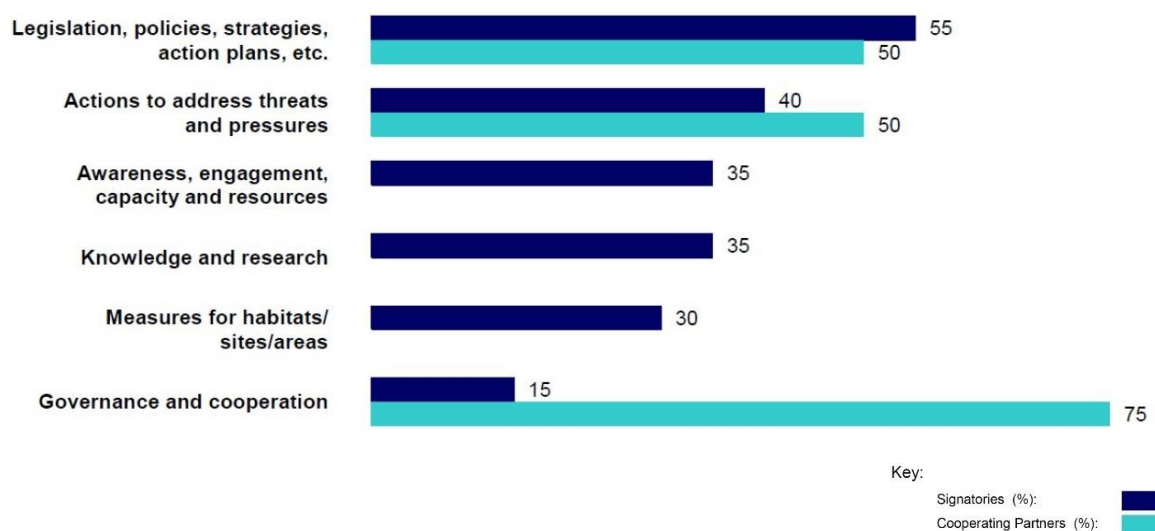
5.1 The “most successful aspects of implementation of the MOU and/or Action Plan” during the reporting period

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 3 Cooperating Partners (75 % of those reporting).

The aspects of implementation most frequently cited by Signatories as areas of positive progress related to advances in legislation, policy, and various kinds of strategies and plans. However, it is not always clear whether these advances were made during the reporting period.

Other prominently reported areas of progress included actions to address threats and pressures, awareness, capacity, and research. Governance and cooperation featured more strongly in Cooperating Partners' responses.

Figure 2: Categories of successful implementation cited in the “high level key messages” section. Figures given against the bars are percentages of those responding to the survey as a whole.



Only two countries described positive advances in terms of conservation status outcomes for raptor species:

- Switzerland referred to the successful reintroduction of Bearded Vultures, *Gypaetus barbatus*, in the Swiss Alps, where the species had become a popular attraction among the public; and to increasing populations of the species in the country, thanks to efforts by the Pro Bearded Vulture Foundation, with a record level of hatching success in the wild being achieved in 2020;
- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) referred to reintroduction of Saker Falcons, *Falco cherrug*, in Bulgaria, where the species had been considered extinct; and
- The UAE also reported success in tackling the problem of electrocution of raptors by powerlines in Mongolia and other countries, thanks to support from the Mohamed Bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund.

Some responses implied that benefits had been achieved through synergies with the processes of the European Union (in one case that the MOU had helped leverage European Union funding); but some others appeared to suggest that in this region the MOU may not have added much to what European Union measures would themselves have done.

Cooperating Partners cited electrocution and illegal killing as threats on which progress had been made during the reporting period, and they emphasised the leverage provided for conservation of vultures and the Saker Falcon by the action plans for these species.

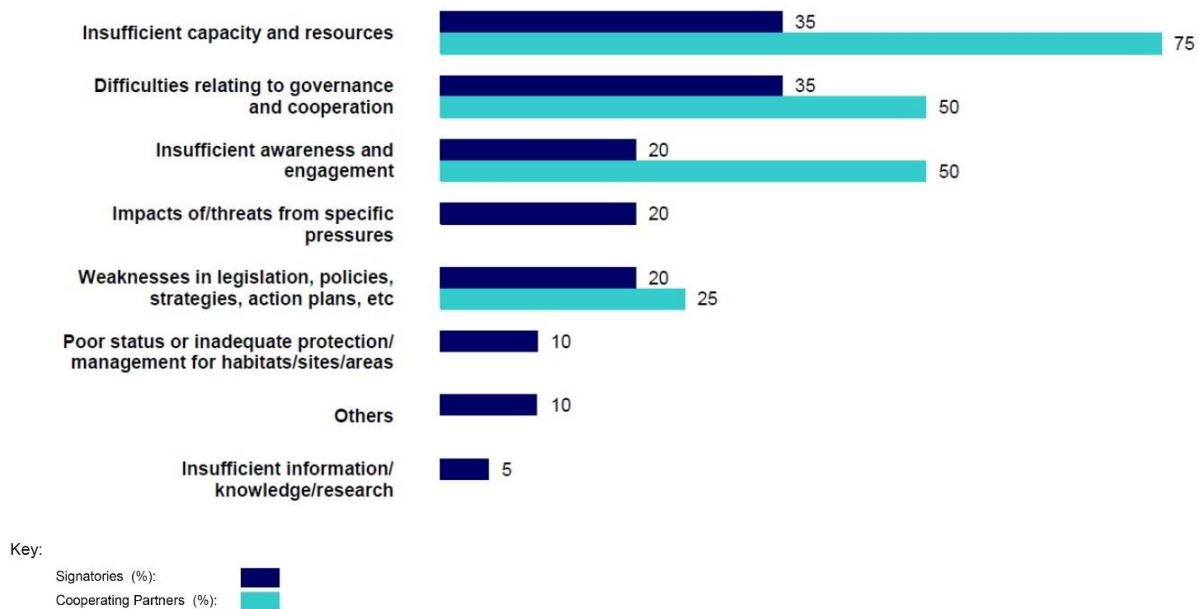
5.2 The “greatest difficulties in implementing the MOU and/or Action Plan” during the reporting period

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Constraints on resources and capacity were the most frequently cited implementation difficulties experienced by Signatories, and these may in turn be the underlying cause of some of the other difficulties reported. Equally prominent however were references to difficulties relating to governance and cooperation, including both integration across sectors and harmonisation internationally of different national approaches to implementing the MOU and its Action Plan. Although governance and cooperation were cited by some countries as areas of good progress (see section 5.1 above), this was also the lowest-scoring category in the “successes” section.

Issues relating to legislation, policies, research and knowledge, while not insignificant, were less reported as areas of concern; and this may be consistent with the high frequency of these issues among the areas of good progress reported in section 5.1 above.

Figure 3: Categories of implementation difficulty cited in the “high level key messages” section.



In the mid-scoring “difficulties” category referring to threats and pressures, specific examples mentioned included the following (see section 10 for further reported detail on threats and pressures):

- Pressures on habitats/land use changes (Switzerland);
- Habitat loss (Madagascar);
- Targeted illegal poisoning and shooting (Hungary);
- Lead poisoning (Switzerland, Germany);
- Trapping (Germany);
- Taking of raptors for falconry (Pakistan);

- Collision and electrocution (Spain); and
- Climate change (Madagascar).

Issues mentioned in the “other difficulties” category included the scale of the challenge in retrofitting extensive networks of powerlines (Hungary), and Monaco mentioned the inapplicability of some of the MOU’s objectives and recommendations to its territory.

Two countries (Finland and The Netherlands) affirmed that they had no significant implementation difficulties to report.

Cooperating Partners mentioned both lack of State funding and problems with capacity as key difficulties, one Partner noting that many governments dedicate more institutional capacity to activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity than they do to the Raptors MOU. Lack of political will was also mentioned, including in connection with the limited rate of production of national raptor conservation strategies and the weak uptake of clear lessons on issues such as veterinary drugs (Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs, NSAIDs).

5.3 The “main priorities for future implementation of the MOU and/or Action Plan”

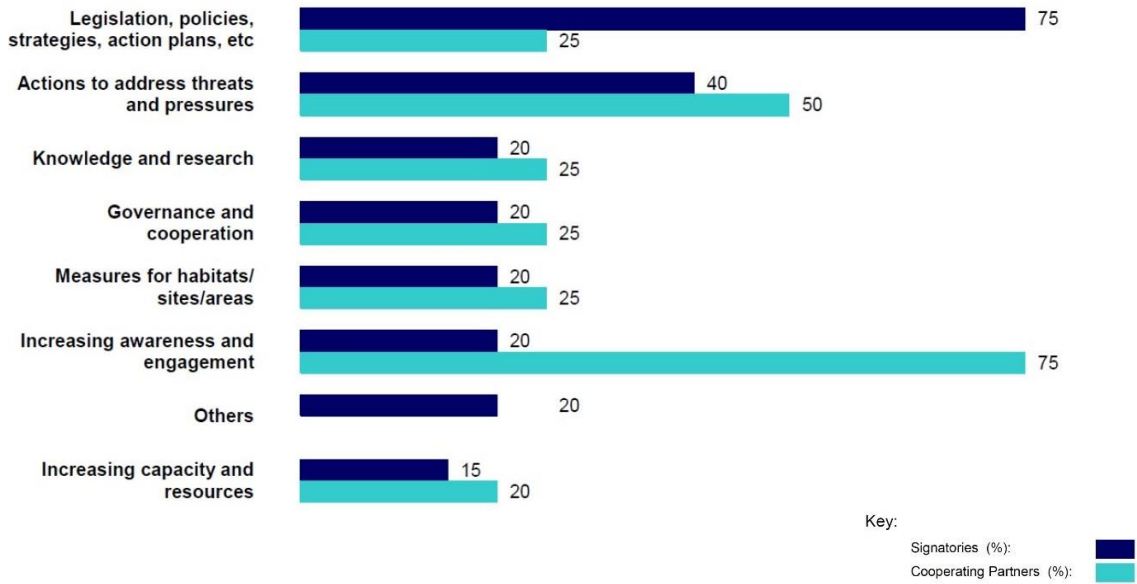
Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

The most frequently cited priorities for future implementation among Signatories related to measures concerning legislation, policies, strategies and plans. Strengthening or updating of laws and regulations was mentioned by Hungary, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland and Syria; national strategies and action plans were mentioned by Finland, Madagascar, Morocco, Norway, Syria and the UAE. Madagascar linked this also to the establishment of a national committee for raptor conservation. Both Finland and Madagascar referred to species action plans.

Action to address particular threats and pressures was the second highest scoring priority for future implementation among Signatories, and below that was a range of other action areas all ranked roughly at the same level.

Awareness and engagement were identified more strongly as future priorities by the MOU’s Cooperating Partners than by Signatories. Cooperating Partners mentioned the need to encourage government engagement in existing task forces and working groups, and to raise awareness within industry sectors and enforcement agencies. Poisoning and electrocution were cited as high priority threats to address, along with the importance of putting national raptor conservation strategies in place, and dialogue to understand and tackle the impediments to progress in general with the MOU’s implementation. The need to fund coordination of the action plans on vultures and Saker Falcon was also emphasised.

Figure 4: Categories of future priorities cited in the “high level key messages” section.



Responses falling in the category labelled “others” included Spain’s reference to standards of decision-making, for example through Environmental Impact Assessments; and Switzerland’s reference to consideration of ecosystem services in spatial planning and decision-making.

Côte d'Ivoire expressed its priorities in terms of species rather than actions (naming five vulture species). No Signatory described priority actions in terms of the conservation status outcomes being sought for particular species or taxonomic groups.

The information reported as future priorities does not closely match the information reported as implementation difficulties (section 5.2 above). Capacity, governance and cooperation emerged as the greatest perceived difficulties, yet they only scored moderately highly as a future priority; knowledge and research have been given high priority for future action, yet they ranked lowest among the current difficulties; laws and strategies emerged as the most important future priority among Signatories, yet were reported only as a mid-ranking area of difficulty. Whilst priorities may be chosen according to perceived opportunity or need, the observed discrepancies may deem further investigation.

6. Raptor conservation strategies and equivalent documents

Response rate: 20 Signatories (100 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

In this section of the survey, Signatories were asked whether a national and/or regional raptor conservation strategy or equivalent document exists in relation to their country. The responses are summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Number of Signatories with a national or regional raptor strategy.

Strategy	Yes	In preparation	No
Africa	1	2	1
Asia	0	2	2
Europe	8	1	3
TOTAL:	9	5	6

Nine Signatories (eight of these in Europe) confirmed the existence of a strategy, and five referred to strategies in development. The figures should be read with caution, however. Croatia, Hungary, Sweden and The Netherlands answered “yes” in relation to the strategy agreed at the level of the European Union (the [“EU’s Strategic Approach to Raptor Conservation”](#), 2019); Germany answered “yes” but referred only to the EU Birds Directive, while Italy and Spain answered “no” despite being Member States of the EU.

Madagascar answered “yes” by reference to two single species action plans, yet Spain took the approach that its single species strategies did not count as raptor conservation strategies for the purpose of the question. Although paragraph 12 of the MOU indicates that single species action plans are within the scope of the reference there to strategies (“Within two years of this Memorandum of Understanding becoming effective, Signatories will aim to prepare and submit to the Interim Coordinating Unit where appropriate a national or regional [e.g. EU] strategy or equivalent documents [e.g. Single Species Action Plans] for category 1 and, where appropriate, category 2 species in Table 1 in the Action Plan”), it is perhaps more useful (for the purposes of the present synthesis) to adopt the broader more “strategic” approach followed by Spain’s response. Accordingly, since Madagascar also indicated that a more general raptor strategy was being developed for its country, in the interest of consistency its response has been deemed as an “in preparation” response.

Copies of documents or download links were provided by Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar and Switzerland; and several EU countries gave the link to the EU strategy.

Reasons given for the absence of a strategy or equivalent document by those countries where they are not yet in place included the following (summarised and paraphrased here):

- Limited resources (Ethiopia and Syria);
- Only recently becoming a Signatory (Ethiopia);
- Political difficulties (Iran); and
- Raptors being covered by more general avian or biodiversity frameworks (Italy, Monaco and Spain).

Among the few who responded to a question about the scope and status of their strategies, Switzerland noted that its national strategy includes timeframes and a scheme of priorities for the listed actions, and it identifies potential funding sources. France mentioned that it has strategies divided by species and currently covering the whole territory of Metropolitan France, while actions are also underway for some species in its overseas territories.

Concerning strategies that are in preparation, Pakistan reported that initial consultations had taken place; Morocco referred to an inception workshop having been completed in 2020 to assess threats and conservation needs (and that the Guidelines developed under the MOU and contained in document [UNEP/CMS/Raptors/MOS2/Inf.3](#) were being followed); Norway indicated that a report had been commissioned from BirdLife International as the first step; and the UAE

anticipated finalising its own strategy in 2022. While confirming that it was already covered by the EU strategy (the “EU’s Strategic Approach to Raptor Conservation”, 2019), Finland also expected to develop a national strategy in future.

When asked whether the strategies in existence or being prepared cover all of the activities listed in Table 2 of the MOU Action Plan, eight of the 14 relevant Signatories answered “yes”, and six “partly” (two used “yes” to select the “partly” option, and it has been presumed that their answers were intended to be classed as “partly”). Reasons for “partial” coverage were given by Finland, Germany and Hungary, who noted that some of the Table 2 activities can only be implemented in relation to actions at national level, Hungary noting that the EU strategy does not cover these.

Among Cooperating Partner’s responses, all four reported involvement in supporting the development of raptor conservation strategies or equivalents. Much of this referred to the [CMS Vultures Multi-species Action Plan](#) (Vulture MsAP), and reference was also made to national vulture conservation plans for Botswana, Greece, Kenya, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The BirdLife Africa Partnership, the IUCN SSC Conservation Planning Specialist Group, the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group, and other stakeholders are also collaborating on plans for a strategy to address belief-based exploitation of vultures in West Africa. Other assistance was highlighted in relation to the strategies for Czech Republic, the EU and Switzerland, a national anti-poisoning action plan in Bulgaria, and the review of the Saker Falcon Action Plan in Europe.

Three Cooperating Partners reported involvement in the implementation of relevant strategies and plans, notably the Vulture MsAP, as well as other activities including survey and monitoring of bird numbers and movements, documenting poisoning incidents and energy infrastructure, and providing training and awareness for communities and enforcement agencies.

Overall, therefore, some progress appears to have been made in the development and implementation of national and regional raptor conservation strategies or equivalent documents. While this remains very incomplete, the documents so far developed, the lessons learnt, and the assistance by Cooperating Partners can support progress in the next intersessional period.

7. Legal protection of species against killing and unsustainable exploitation

Response rate: 20 Signatories (100 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

In this section, Signatories were asked whether all species of migratory birds of prey in their country that are listed in Annex I of the Raptors MOU are granted full legal protection from deliberate killing and taking from the wild. All except two Signatories confirmed that this is the case.

Monaco responded “partly”, but their answer should probably be deemed a “yes”, since it appears that all species are protected and the response was simply indicating that there is no special mention of raptors. Syria also responded “partly”, but indicated that a new law was soon to be adopted which would cover all the relevant species.

Fifteen respondents specified the particular law concerned, citing statutes ranging from one as old as 1930 and one as recent as 2021. Those who gave further details described various provisions, in many cases indicating that raptors were assigned to the stricter levels of wildlife protection available. Some mentioned prohibitions against specified activities, including intentional killing, injuring, taking, trade, disturbance, and destruction of nests and eggs.

Provision for exceptions was mentioned in a few cases, for example, where control of raptors may be necessary to safeguard other species, and subject to specific authorisations being granted. Such exceptions are accepted in many legal frameworks, and the MOU Action Plan suggests that they may be appropriate if they meet the conditions of being granted only where authorised by a competent body, where the action is sustainable, and where it is not detrimental to the conservation status of the species concerned. It is likely that several of the protections cited by other Signatories contain such provisions, but the survey did not ask specifically about this. It could be relevant to survey exceptions to deliberate killing and taking legally permitted, as well as any such authorisations granted in the reporting period in future reports.

The specific additional question asked on this occasion was whether countries had legislation in place that bans the use of exposed poison baits and other toxic chemical methods of predator or pest control. All but three Signatories answered affirmatively. Ethiopia indicated that, while such methods are not generally prohibited, there are restrictions applicable to trapping licences. Monaco considered that the issue did not arise in its territory, and Syria indicated that it had partial controls but its law was in need of updating.

Where further details on this issue were given, in some cases this was done by referring to provisions that specifically outlaw the use of poison baits, while in others it was by reference to a general prohibition on the killing of protected species, rather than a specific provision about methods of predator control. In some responses it was not clear which of these was the case. France and The Netherlands also referred to restrictions applied via the licensing of biocides, with The Netherlands pointing to an applicable EU Regulation on this.

Two Cooperating Partners affirmed that they had assisted with measures to apply legal protection for Annex I species. BirdLife International reported active engagement in policy processes relating to illegal killing of birds, such as the Bern Convention and the CMS Intergovernmental Task Force on Illegal Killing, Taking and Trade of Migratory Birds in the Mediterranean (MIKT). It also reported the undertaking of projects (particularly in the Mediterranean, and concerning vulture poisoning in Africa) on detection and enforcement, and assisting national authorities *inter alia* with evidence gathering and training. BirdLife International also referred to involvements relating to legislation, policy, law enforcement, incident responses, capacity building, data management, and awareness in countries including Austria, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guinea Bissau, India, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Luxembourg, Morocco, Nepal, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, South Africa, Syria, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

The International Association for Falconry and Conservation of Birds of Prey also reported being active in the MIKT Task Force, and organising conferences (mainly prior to the reporting period) on illegal trade of raptors in Central Asia, the Middle East and North Africa.

It is encouraging that most Signatories indicated that legal protection for Annex I raptors is in place in their countries. Some mentioned relevant statutes providing for exceptions to this protection, and it may be valuable for the reporting process to ask for further details on this aspect in future.

8. Species population management and recovery programmes

This section of the survey asked about three specific types of action for species population management and recovery: species action plans, reintroduction and restocking projects, and supplementary feeding initiatives. The responses concerning each of these are summarised below.

8.1 Species Action Plans

Response rate: 20 Signatories (100 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

The survey asked about the existence in each country of single species or multi-species action plans for migratory birds of prey. The main added value of information from this question relates to the identification of plans at the national and sub-national level, and most Signatories answered it in that sense. Some made reference to international plans. For future reporting, it may be useful to specify whether international plans are within the scope of the question.

As noted in section 6 above, this issue also overlaps with the development and adoption of national and regional raptor conservation strategies, which according to paragraph 12 of the MOU are for Category 1 and, where appropriate, Category 2 species¹, and can include single species action plans. In the reporting format, the guidance accompanying the questions addressed in section 6 above and in the present section, as well as the relationship between these questions, might therefore be slightly refined for future reporting cycles.

Various types of action plan have been developed for the conservation of birds of prey, and it is possible that respondents have applied distinct approaches in deciding which documents qualify for a positive response to the question posed. The results should be read with this caveat in mind. For future reporting, additional guidance might be given on what is most useful to include for this purpose.

Nine of the 20 Signatories reported that one or more action plans for raptor species were in existence in their country. One of these however related only to a non-migratory species (the Little Owl, *Athene noctua*), so for the purposes of this question this response should not be considered.

Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia and Madagascar reported that plans were in preparation. Madagascar's case related to the development of an international plan for the Sooty Falcon, *Falco concolor*, but in response to the question in section 6 above, however, Madagascar also referred to an existing national plan for Sooty Falcon and Eleonora's Falcon, *F. eleonora*. Madagascar has therefore been deemed as a "yes" response.

Eight Signatories answered "no", but one of these, the UAE, referred to a plan due to be finalised in 2022, so its response has been deemed to be "in preparation" instead. Italy, in answering "no", took a diligent approach to interpreting the question in accordance with the advice given about the reporting period; but this may not have been approached in the same way by all respondents (for example, Pakistan's "yes" answer relates to a plan from 2016).

Most of the plans identified by Signatories are single species plans, with Pakistan's plan for vultures being the most obvious multi-species example. The species mentioned by each country are shown in Table 2 below. The majority of the plans identified are national in scope, but two are international and several others have a sub-national scope. For future reporting, it may be useful to specify whether international plans are within the scope of the question.

¹ Table 1 of Annex 3 to the MOU assigns the bird of prey species covered by the MOU to three categories:
Category 1 = Globally threatened and Near Threatened species as defined according to the latest IUCN Red List and listed as such in the BirdLife International World Bird Database;
Category 2 = species considered to have Unfavourable Conservation Status at a regional level within the Range States and territories listed in Annex 2 to the MoU; and
Category 3 = all other migratory species.

Table 2: Species covered by raptor action plans as reported by Signatories. References to “regional” in the table refer to sub-national regions. *Plans in preparation, **Sweden also referred to Peregrine Falcon and Golden Eagle as species for which there were previous plans which have now expired.

Country	Species
Croatia	- Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> * - Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> *
France	- Bonelli’s Eagle <i>Aquila fasciata</i> - Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> - White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> - Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i> - Bearded Vulture <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i> - Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> - Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> - Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> - Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>
Germany	- Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> - Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> - Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> - White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> - Montagu’s Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i>
Hungary	- Red-footed Falcon <i>Falco vespertinus</i> - Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> (SakerGAP international plan)
Iran	- Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> - Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i>
Madagascar	- Sooty Falcon <i>Falco concolor</i> (and international plan in preparation)* - [Eleonora’s Falcon (<i>Falco eleonorae</i> ; see note in text above)]
Morocco	- Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> (for Al Hoceima Park) - Bearded Vulture <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i> (for the High Atlas Park)
Pakistan	- National Vulture Conservation Strategy and Action Plan
Spain	- Spanish Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila adalberti</i> (national and regional) - Bearded Vulture <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i> (national and regional) - Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> (regional) - Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> (regional) - Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> (regional) - Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> (regional) - Bonelli’s Eagle <i>Aquila fasciata</i> (regional) - Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> (regional) - Montagu’s Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i> (regional) - Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> (regional) - Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i> (regional) - Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> (regional) - Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> (regional) - Eleonora’s Falcon <i>Falco eleonorae</i> (regional) - Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> (regional)
Sweden**	- Montagu’s Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i>
UAE	- National Action Plan for Raptors *

Countries reporting that they did not have any species action plans for migratory birds of prey reasoned as follows:

- Ethiopia has only recently signed the MOU, and has limited capacity;
- Finland has a lack of resources, but also has other types of plan that are relevant for raptor conservation;
- Italy has previously published plans for Lanner Falcon, *Falco biarmicus*, Eleonora’s Falcon, *F. eleonora*, Lesser Kestrel, *F. naumanni*, Egyptian Vulture, *Neophron percnopterus*, and Griffon Vulture, *Gyps fulvus* (in Sardinia), but these were all published prior to the reporting period;
- Monaco indicated that a general avifauna action plan might be possible in future;
- Norway has a raptor plan but only for a species that is non-migratory (Eurasian Eagle Owl, *Bubo bubo*);
- Syria is content to engage with relevant regional initiatives; and
- The Netherlands relies on more general types of conservation plan.

All four Cooperating Partners reported being involved in various ways with the development and/or implementation of species action plans for raptors within the geographical area covered by the MOU. These involvements include:

- Helping to develop and implement the [Blueprint for the Recovery of Asia’s Globally Threatened Vultures](#), and the Vulture MsAP and its [Strategic Implementation Plan](#);
- Helping to develop a multi-species action plan for West African vultures, and flyway action plans for Cinereous Vulture and the Balkan and Central Asian populations of Egyptian Vulture;
- Helping with the European species action plans for Saker Falcon and Red-footed Falcon;
- Assisting with national action plans for vultures in Bulgaria, India, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Zimbabwe, Red Kites in Luxembourg, and falcons in Jordan; and
- Providing data, knowledge, coordination support and on-the-ground project implementation in various countries.

8.2 Reintroduction and restocking projects

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Respondents were asked to provide information about any reintroduction or restocking projects that had been implemented involving migratory birds of prey, and to indicate whether captive breeding was involved. Projects to be reported were those undertaken “in accordance with prevailing international guidelines”, and the question in this respect pointed particularly to IUCN’s [“Guidelines for reintroductions and other conservation translocations”](#).

Nine Signatories indicated the existence of relevant projects. Salient points from the responses are summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Raptor reintroduction and restocking projects cited by Signatories.

Country	Project(s)
France	(List of species; no details given).
Germany	Project begun in 2021 to reintroduce Bearded Vultures in the Bavarian Eastern Alps, sourcing birds from Spain. Released

	birds will be monitored using global positioning system (GPS) tags.
Italy	Restocking of Egyptian Vultures in the Basilicata region, Griffon Vultures in Sardinia, Lanner Falcons in the Latium region, Lesser Kestrels in the Po Plain, and Red Kites (starting soon) in the Aspromonte National Park, all supported by EU LIFE-funded projects.
Kazakhstan/ Pakistan (reported by the UAE)	Sheikh Zayed Falcon Release Program restocks wild populations of Peregrine and Saker Falcons with birds sourced from the UAE. Includes some satellite tracking after release.
Morocco	Operates two centres for the rehabilitation of injured raptors and post-recovery release at Jbel Moussa (vultures) and Bir Lahmer. This led to the re-establishment of Griffon Vulture as a breeding species in the Jbel Moussa region after an absence of over 40 years.
Pakistan	Captive breeding centre established at Changa Manga, Punjab, to breed vultures for release.
Spain	Translocation and reintroduction projects in various locations involving Lesser Kestrel (several projects), Osprey (three projects), Bearded Vulture (three projects), White-tailed Eagle (one project, using birds brought from Norway), Peregrine Falcon (several projects in city locations), Red Kite (one project), Cinereous Vulture (two projects involving rehabilitated birds), and Bonelli's Eagle (one project).
Sweden	Long-running Peregrine Falcon restocking programme has improved the population status of this species in the country, and the programme will be phased out.
Switzerland	Long-running reintroduction programme has successfully re-established Bearded Vulture as a breeding species initially in the Alps and now more widely in the country. Record numbers of fledglings hatched in 2020. Project running since 2015 to release young Ospreys brought from other countries into Switzerland, supported by supplementary feeding for an initial period following release. As yet no breeding recorded.

Four Signatories referred to captive breeding being involved, as follows:

- Italy mentioned captive breeding as a component of its projects for restocking Egyptian Vultures, Griffon Vultures and Lanner Falcons;
- Germany's reintroduced Bearded Vultures are sourced from a Bearded Vulture Captive Breeding Centre at Guadalentín, Spain;
- Pakistan reported establishing a vulture captive breeding centre in Punjab; and
- Spain's projects relating to Lesser Kestrel and Peregrine Falcon use captive-bred birds, and those relating to Bearded Vulture, Red Kite, and Bonelli's Eagle use a combination of captive-bred and wild-sourced birds.

Two Signatories referred to having followed the above-mentioned IUCN Guidelines: Sweden in relation to its Peregrine programme, and Switzerland in relation to its Osprey programme.

Ten Signatories reported that no migratory raptor reintroduction or restocking projects had been undertaken, the reason given in most cases being that such projects were not needed or were a low priority in their countries. Hungary mentioned that a project for Lesser Spotted Eagle *Clanga pomarina* in Hungary and Slovakia had been proposed but had failed to secure funding (from the EU LIFE programme). Norway mentioned Peregrine Falcon and Eurasian Eagle Owl reintroduction projects having taken place in the past, and that it has been the provider of White-tailed Eagles for reintroduction programmes in Ireland and Scotland. Monaco mentioned the absence of a framework for regulating such initiatives.

Cooperating Partners were asked whether they had been involved with any relevant projects. Three said yes. The IAF mentioned supporting Peregrine reintroductions in Poland; while BirdLife International cited a plan to start restocking Egyptian Vultures in Bulgaria and Greece (including captive breeding); the establishment of a rehabilitation centre for confiscated birds in Jordan; and release of birds of prey after their confiscation from falconers in Yemen. BirdLife mentioned use of the IUCN Guidelines in relation to the Bulgaria/Greece Egyptian Vulture project.

8.3 Supplementary feeding initiatives

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Nine of the 19 responding Signatories reported having established and maintained supplementary feeding initiatives for necrophagous birds of prey, with several of these mentioning plans for further expansion of this activity. The responses are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4: Signatories operating supplementary feeding initiatives for necrophagous birds of prey.

Country	Initiatives
Croatia	Two sites, one serving also as an observation facility.
France	Four unnamed species; no further details.
Finland	For White-tailed Sea Eagle in the past, but now discontinued given the improved status of the species.
Hungary	Several sites operated by National Park Directorates, mainly in winter.
Italy	Two sites in Piemonte Region (vultures); three sites (planned) in Calabria Region (to support reintroduced Red Kites); 37 sites in Sardinia (and more planned) managed by stockbreeders (Griffon Vultures); and six sites in Sicily (Egyptian Vultures).
Morocco	A national network of supplementary feeding sites established by the Department of Water and Forests, currently in four areas and planning two more.
Pakistan	NSAID-free food provided for vultures in one Vulture Safe Zone in Sindh Province, and others are planned.
Spain	A national programme, integrated with sanitary management of animal by-products.
UAE	Two main sites in the Emirate of Dubai, catering for Lappet-faced Vultures <i>Torgos tracheliotos</i> .

Eight other Signatories answered in the negative; those giving reasons for this mainly indicating that the issue is not relevant in their country or is not a priority. Two others answered “not known”.

Three of the four Cooperating Partners reported involvement in a number of supplementary feeding initiatives, mostly for vultures but also for Red Kites. Those who gave details referred to initiatives in Albania, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Croatia, Greece, Hungary, India, Kenya, Nepal, North Macedonia, Spain, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Overall, it is apparent that species action planning activity has advanced in some countries but not others (although some of the latter have wider measures that may negate the need); and examples of projects undertaking reintroduction, restocking and supplementary feeding have helpfully been identified.

9. Conservation and management of habitats and sites

This section of the survey included two questions, covering measures for the improvement and restoration of habitats, and the identification of appropriately protected or managed sites.

9.1 Improving or restoring habitats for birds of prey

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 3 Cooperating Partners (75 % of those reporting).

Asked about measures that have been implemented to improve or restore the habitats of birds of prey, 15 Signatories reported the existence of such measures. Many of these, however, simply referred in general terms to the existence of protected areas, rather than specifically addressing improvement or restoration. Norway mentioned clearing vegetation to promote nesting, but only in relation to a non-migratory species (Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo*).

More relevant responses included:

- Restoration of mires (raptor relevance not specified) (Finland);
- Development of nesting sites for Lesser Kestrel, *Falco naumanni* (France);
- Wetland and grassland restoration, and elimination of invasive alien species in various areas (though none of these specifically for raptors) (Hungary);
- Removal of invasive plants from cliffs (Monaco);
- Tree planting (raptor relevance not specified) (Pakistan);
- Restoration of forests and wetlands, assumed to benefit raptors (Spain);
- “Design of ecological infrastructure” (no further details) (Switzerland);
- Improving food availability for birds in arable land, benefiting Montagu’s Harrier, Kestrel, Marsh Harrier, Common and Rough-legged Buzzard; improvement of water quality has improved habitat conditions for Osprey (though the report does not indicate whether it was done for this purpose) (The Netherlands); and
- Tree planting and creation of artificial lakes in the Dubai desert to support wildlife, including birds of prey (UAE).

Among Cooperating Partners, only BirdLife International gave examples of assistance with habitat improvement or restoration, citing:

- The “Great Green Wall” initiative in Africa;
- An EU LIFE-funded project in Bulgaria restoring foraging habitats for Imperial Eagle;
- Rat eradication and artificial nest establishment on islets in Greece to improve Eleonora’s Falcon habitat;
- Artificial nest establishment elsewhere in Greece for Lesser Kestrels; and

- Wetland and other habitat restoration in Switzerland (raptor relevance not specified).

9.2 Important sites for migratory raptors

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

The MOU's Action Plan contains a provisional list of areas that were known (at the time of the MOU's adoption) to be important congregatory sites for birds of prey in Africa and Eurasia. While acknowledging that such list is incomplete, and is being further developed, in this section of the survey Signatories were asked to identify which of the currently listed sites are designated as protected areas or are otherwise appropriately managed, taking into account the conservation requirements of migratory birds of prey.

Nine countries confirmed that they have no sites listed in the Action Plan. This does not mean that they have no important sites, but simply that they are not currently in a position to contribute data to this part of the survey.

Of the remaining nine respondents, six provided designation status information in the requested form. This information is summarised below.

Table 5: Number of sites currently listed in the MOU's Action Plan that are partly or fully covered by protected area status or by other appropriate management measures.

Country	Number of MOU Action Plan sites covered
Finland	1 of 1 (partly covered)
Italy	7 of 9 (no answer given for 2 sites)
Spain	8 of 9 (2 of these only partly covered)
Sweden	2 of 2 (both almost fully covered)
Switzerland	1 of 1
Syria	1 of 1 (partly covered)

Madagascar provided a list of 13 protected areas but without reference to the Action Plan list. Cross-matching the information provided with the sites in the Action Plan list appears to indicate that the relevant figure for Madagascar is "0 of 5", hence information for this Signatory is not reported in Table 5.

Given the very provisional and incomplete status of the Action Plan site list as it currently stands, the above results are currently of limited significance. They nevertheless provide a starting point for reporting which should become more meaningful if an expansion of the site list is agreed on by MOS3.

Among the Cooperating Partners, The Peregrine Fund reported working on the identification of a Key Biodiversity Area (KBA) for an important breeding cliff for Ruppell's Vulture, *Gyps rueppelli* in Kenya. The organization has prepared a scientific article on the adequacy of protection and management of important sites for raptors in the country. BirdLife International cited involvements including:

- Analysing gaps in the sites list in the MOU Action Plan;
- Promoting protection under EU Directives of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) for raptors in Austria, Greece and Luxembourg;

- Developing and implementing reserve management plans in Jordan;
- Identifying and promoting protection of KBAs and IBAs for vultures in various countries; and
- Managing “Vulture Safe Zone” programmes in India, Mozambique, Nepal, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Overall, while habitat management activities that may benefit raptors have been reported by several Signatories, many referred simply to the existence of protected areas, and more information would be useful in future on specific measures for habitat improvement and restoration. Useful updated information on the protection status of important sites was received from a few Signatories, but the question addressing this was linked to the incomplete and provisional site list annexed to the MOU – this list is expected to be significantly improved at MOS3, and hence reporting on this question should become more informative in future.

10. Assessing and responding to threats and pressures

This section of the survey included questions covering assessment of threats, actions taken in response to the threats, and the use of environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments.

10.1 Threat assessments and responses

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Sixteen Signatories reported that they had undertaken assessments of the nature, likelihood, severity or potential consequences of threats faced by birds of prey, and measures for maintaining their Favourable Conservation Status. This includes one respondent who answered “no” but then gave information about a recent threat assessment, so their answer has been deemed a “yes”. Iran and Sweden indicated that for them this was not a priority.

A variety of processes was employed for undertaking threat assessments. Respondents who gave details cited the following:

- Assessed via national reports under the EU Birds Directive (article 12) and via national Red List update processes (Finland);
- Evaluated through species action plans (France);
- Covered via national reports under the EU Birds Directive, national Red List update processes, and earlier projects (prior to the reporting period) examining illegal killing and capture (Germany);
- Documented via national reports under the EU Birds Directive (article 12) (Hungary, Spain);
- Assessed via updating the national bird Red List and informed by recent telemetry studies (Italy);
- Assessed as part of an avifauna inventory undertaken in 2019-2020 (Monaco);
- Raptor threat assessments presented at a scientific workshop in 2020. Mortality data analysed to inform about threats (Morocco);
- Threats faced by birds of prey in Norway and measures to be taken assessed and included in BirdLife Norway's report "Conservation of birds of prey in Norway - Guidelines and management priorities" (Norway);

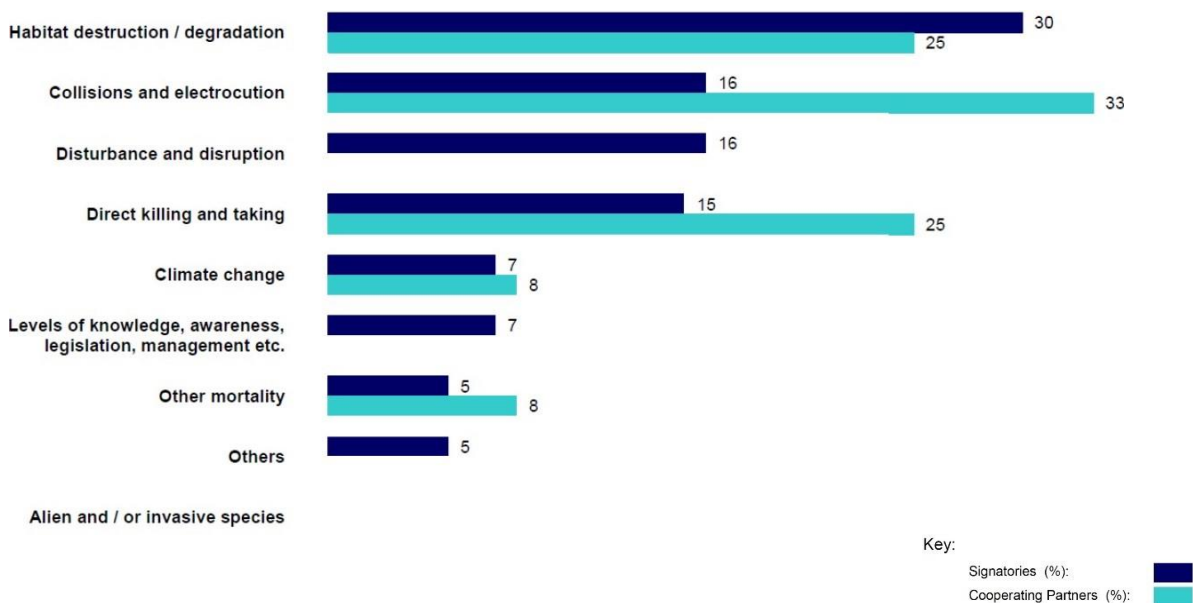
- Assessed species-by-species and included in the national “Raptor and Owl Conservation Strategic Guidelines and Management Priorities” document (Switzerland);
- Powerline-related threats assessed as part of an EU LIFE-funded project on Egyptian Vulture, though more is work needed on threats related to hunting, killing and taking of raptors in general) (Syria);
- Studied in several individual studies focusing on threat types and response measures (The Netherlands); and
- Assessed as part of a national project covering all of the country’s Important Bird Areas (UAE).

Among the MOU’s Cooperating Partners, The Peregrine Fund has assessed impacts of poisoning on vultures, and is involved in the response to poisoning of raptors. BirdLife International has conducted quantitative assessments of illegal bird killing in several regions, and is undertaking a study of causes of mortality in large satellite tagged landbirds throughout Africa, Europe and the Middle East. BirdLife International has also undertaken a questionnaire survey of responses to collision/electrocution threats in the Mediterranean, as well as other specific assessments relating to veterinary drugs, poison baits, lead, energy infrastructure, and belief-based killing and trade of vultures.

Respondents were then asked to identify (based on assessment results or informed opinion) the three most important categories of threat affecting birds of prey in their country or area of operation (from a list provided) limiting responses to issues that are “reliably known to be having an actual adverse impact on migratory birds of prey at present”. Not all responses used the list of options in the way intended, but in most cases the answers have been interpretable in terms of the categories suggested.

The aggregated prioritisation scores resulting from this are shown in Figure 5 below. Factors affecting habitats emerged overall as a greater concern than factors affecting individual birds directly; except that Cooperating Partners ranked collisions and electrocution as the most important threat. Direct killing and taking also ranked highly, as did disturbance, though the latter only in the view of Signatories.

Figure 5: The most important types of threat affecting African-Eurasian birds of prey. Figures given against the bars are percentages of the total responses to this question.



Issues cited in the category “other” included poisoning, both unintentional (e.g. by pollutants) and deliberate, though the latter should have been reported in the category “direct killing and taking” There could be a case for offering “unintentional poisoning” as a distinct category in the future questionnaire format; and it is also possible that this threat led to the selection in some cases of the category “other mortality”.

The findings above are broadly congruent with the situation applying to migratory species in general, as reflected the most recent round of national reporting by CMS Parties (for CMS COP13 in 2020). In those reports, habitat destruction/degradation and illegal hunting emerged as the most widely cited pressures on migratory species, with disturbance also being significant. The main difference between that picture and the position reported here for raptors is the particular importance of collisions and electrocution as threats to birds of prey.

Actions taken by Signatories in response to threats, as reported in the present survey, included:

Habitat destruction/degradation

- Habitat improvements via a large-scale afforestation project (Pakistan);

Collisions and electrocution

- Powerline mitigation measures to prevent electrocution, including insulation and undergrounding (Croatia);
- National avifauna committee working with electricity distribution companies (France);
- Marking of power lines (Germany);
- Collaboration with electricity distribution companies and the national grid operator to institute widespread measures for preventing electrocution and collisions (large task; still ongoing) (Hungary);
- Insulation of electric poles in key areas for raptors (achieved in some pilot areas, though wider implementation still needed (Italy);

Disturbance and disruption

- Collaboration with the forestry sector to prevent accidental damage and disturbance to nest sites (Finland);
- Nest protection, including buffer zones around nests to reduce disturbance (The Netherlands);

Direct killing and taking

- Direct killing and taking addressed via several EU LIFE-funded projects that include collaboration on forensic investigations and training of police, rangers, prosecutors and judges (Hungary);
- Increasing confiscation of taken falcons, followed by rehabilitation and release (Iran);
- National Action Plan to prevent illegal killing of birds, including increased surveillance and higher penalties (Italy);
- Surveillance and enforcement to prevent illegal killing, capture and trade (Pakistan);
- Criminal investigation of poisoning incidents (The Netherlands);

Others

- Prohibition of lead ammunition to combat poisoning (Germany);
- Phasing out of lead ammunition (use for waterbird hunting prohibited by national legislation), to combat poisoning (Switzerland);

Cross-cutting/mixed

- Habitat improvements and protection of breeding sites (Germany);
- Awareness programme to minimise disturbance at important sites (Monaco);
- Establishment of “micro-reserves” at nesting sites (Monaco); and
- Improvement of habitat quality in arable land, for improved nest protection and increased prey availability (The Netherlands).

Action taken by Cooperating Partners in response to threats included:

- Engagement with CMS Task Forces/Working Groups on energy, lead, poisoning and illegal killing, the latter in support of the Rome Strategic Plan;
- Various activities aimed at reducing impacts of energy infrastructure, poisoning and other bird crimes in particular;
- Training, awareness raising, retrofitting powerlines, and working with industry, the financial sector and enforcement agencies; and
- Defending threatened areas, protecting nest sites, and policy development work on agriculture.

10.2 Use of Environmental Impact Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

All the responding Signatories confirmed that they had requirements in place for proposed activities that may significantly impact birds of prey or their habitats to be subject to Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) or Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs). Nine Signatories cited their specific national statutes that provide for EIAs. The EU Directives on EIA and SEA were mentioned by only two respondents, but in principle these Directives apply to all MOU Signatories that are also EU Member States.

The respondents who gave further details mainly described the applicable provisions in very general terms (e.g. assessments are required for projects that may have negative effects on the environment, and they enable the examination of potential mitigation measures), without making any specific comments on applicability to raptor conservation. A few exceptions to this were the references by Monaco to nesting sites, by Iran and Pakistan to powerlines, and by Syria to the use of BirdLife International’s “Sensitivity Mapping Toolkit” for cases affecting soaring birds, including raptors. A few responses referred to the existence of explanatory guidelines. Norway and Switzerland made reference to provisions for a precautionary approach - the former in the context of its forestry legislation and the latter in relation to the handling of organisms under its environmental protection legislation.

The survey question that asked about “the extent to which the results of these assessments are used to inform relevant consent decisions and associated mitigation measures” was only answered by one Signatory that confirmed that this does happen.

Two of the MOU’s Cooperating Partners reported that they had assisted with measures to ensure that proposals for activities that may significantly impact birds of prey or their habitats are subject to EIAs or SEAs. The Peregrine Fund reported regularly commenting on EIAs for powerline and windfarm developments in Kenya, and having done so in relation to a wind power SEA. This included providing maps and other data on vultures. The Fund noted some disappointment with the levels of attention given to this information in decision-making.

BirdLife International mentioned relevant work in Austria, Croatia, Jordan, Kenya, Luxembourg, Oman, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, including policy advocacy, developing national guidelines, serving on a national EIA committee, contributing to screening and scoping of individual assessments, reviewing EIA reports, advising on mitigation/compensation proposals, and legally challenging deficient (or absent) EIAs. BirdLife International also expressed some concern about the quality of the EIA process in some places.

The mostly generic nature of the responses given in this section of the reports (by Signatories in the main) is understandable, considering that the application of relevant provisions will depend on the specifics of each case. The question about existence/non-existence of relevant requirements may become more meaningful in future reporting rounds when a broader range of Signatories from all regions are submitting reports. On the other hand, the purpose of this section of the report might bear further consideration to decide what kind of information is most useful to distil at international level. It may be, for example, that a better approach would be to focus on the effectiveness of EIA/SEA processes by reference to raptor-relevant mitigation measures applied as a result of EIA/SEA-based development authorisation conditions.

Section 10 has generated an important benchmark picture of the perceived relative importance of various threats and pressures that migratory birds of prey face. This picture, and the way it evolves, will help inform priorities for future response action.

11. Action / integration across sectors

This section of the survey included a question about the integration of raptor conservation in other policy sectors, and a question about raising awareness among non-conservation decision-makers.

11.1 Integrating raptor conservation in other policy sectors

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

In this section of the survey, respondents were asked whether the conservation of migratory birds of prey is integrated within the policies of sectors such as agriculture, forestry, energy, transport, waste management and tourism. Most Signatories affirmed that this was the case in their countries (15 respondents, with nine of these indicating that there was some “partial” integration). Three answered in the negative, and one did not know.

Not all responses necessarily addressed policy as such, several referring instead to procedural or institutional links. A number of responses cited policies in the environment sector which were expected to be taken into account by other sectors, rather than the policies of those other sectors themselves. Those instances therefore do not quite demonstrate “integration”, but they are of some relevance.

Examples cited included the following:

- Conservation measures for migratory birds of prey are part of the 10-year management plans in the forestry sector; measures to minimise electrocution of birds are integrated in the operational guidelines of the national electricity distributor and conditions are applied to State-supported agricultural operations (Croatia);

- A national avifauna committee brings together environment and energy sectors, and conditions are applied to State-supported agricultural and forestry operations (France);
- Environmental conditions are applied to State-supported agricultural and forestry operations (Hungary);
- There is a cross-sectoral National Committee for the Conservation of Birds of Prey (Madagascar);
- A centralised database of sensitive biodiversity species which all sectoral operators, landowners and others are obliged to check before beginning development or land use change projects, and the presence of any such species may then trigger safeguarding measures (Norway);
- Some consideration to the conservation requirements of migratory birds of prey is given in forestry, waste management, transport and tourism sectors (Spain);
- Switzerland - Sustainability is enshrined in an overarching way in the country's Federal Constitution (Switzerland); and
- There are guidelines and a code of conduct for the forestry sector on avoiding nest site disturbance; though this is reportedly only partially successful, given that widespread clear-felling of non-native trees has negatively impacted raptors (The Netherlands).

Among those answering in the negative, Iran referred to separate operation of individual sectors, Monaco indicated little relevance of the question to its situation, and Syria suggested capacity constraints rather than any lack of willingness to integrate. Although answering in the affirmative for some sectors, Spain reported less uptake in relation to agriculture and energy.

Three Cooperating Partners reported involvement in efforts to integrate raptor conservation in other sectors. The IAF referred to working with the financial sector on creating bird-safe standards for electricity transmission infrastructure, and the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group cited work with stakeholder departments in various countries on integrating policies to reduce the impact of veterinary drugs on vultures. BirdLife International reported that its "Migratory Soaring Birds" project aims to integrate conservation of birds into the agriculture, energy, hunting, tourism and waste management sectors in 11 countries along the Rift Valley/Red Sea Flyway, and that it also undertakes advocacy more generally at various levels in the agriculture, forestry, energy and tourism sectors in a variety of countries.

In their national reports to COP13, CMS Parties have been asked to provide information on the integration of migratory species issues in strategies and planning processes relating to development, poverty reduction and livelihoods. In the most recent round of reporting (to CMS COP13 in 2020) several Parties gave examples of relevant linkages. There may be scope in future for useful coordination at national level between the respective focal points for CMS and the Raptors MOU in documenting progress in this area.

11.2 Awareness-raising among non-conservation decision-makers

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Respondents were asked whether any programmes had been implemented during the reporting period among government departments, other than the department that has lead responsibility for the Raptors MOU, to inform decision-makers about the conservation needs of migratory birds of prey. Ten Signatories answered affirmatively (although not all necessarily referring to implemented programmes as such), eight said there had been no such programmes, and one did not know.

Instances cited included the following:

- An inter-ministerial consultation on launch of new national plans (unspecified) (France);
- Dialogue with the Agriculture Ministry on hunting and lead ammunition (Germany);
- Liaison with Interpol regarding smuggling of raptors, especially Saker Falcon (Iran);
- A National Action Plan to combat the illegal killing of birds, and an associated multi-stakeholder Steering Committee (Italy);
- A cross-sectoral National Committee for the Conservation of Birds of Prey (Madagascar);
- A National Biodiversity Strategy for 2030 (adopted in 2020) (Monaco);
- Regular dialogue and annual reporting (Norway);
- A Forest Policy and accompanying guidelines, federally-agreed environmental goals for agriculture, advice to the tourism sector, influence on transport development, a national Energy Strategy, the Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport's "Nature, Landscape and Army" programme and a Green Economy Action Plan (Switzerland);
- The work of the Emirates Council for Climate Change and Environment (UAE).

Of those giving reasons for a negative response, Croatia cited a lack of resources, Morocco a lack of awareness, Sweden and The Netherlands indicated that the issue is not a priority, while Finland and Hungary suggested that initiatives addressing biodiversity more broadly are more likely than any that specifically focus on raptors.

Among Cooperating Partners, BirdLife International referred to activities involving health and agriculture ministries concerning vultures in unspecified countries, and work with the Ministries of Agriculture and Foreign Affairs in Hungary. The IUCN Vulture Specialist Group mentioned various interactions with regional and local governments, law enforcement, and other entities in African and European countries to reduce the impact of poisoning of birds of prey.

Section 11 has provided some useful examples concerning ways of integrating raptor conservation in the work of other sectors. National situations and opportunities vary considerably, but policy integration continues to be regarded as a key area for achieving successful impact for the MOU.

12. Research, monitoring and information management

This section of the survey asked about five key areas of implementation activity under a "Research, monitoring and information management" heading: assessing the status and trends of raptor populations; programmes for systematic and coordinated monitoring; guidelines and protocols for monitoring; mechanisms for agreeing on research priorities, and platforms for exchange of knowledge and experience. The responses concerning each of these key areas are summarised below.

12.1 Raptor population status and trends assessments

Response rate: 20 Signatories (100 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Sixteen Signatories reported having undertaken assessments during the reporting period of the status and trends of relevant populations of birds of prey in their country. Specifics (where provided) are summarised in Table 6 below. In future, consideration may be given to requesting Signatories and Cooperating Partners to report information using the headings and trend categories contained in Table 6.

Table 6: Raptor population status and trend assessments undertaken by Signatories.

Country	Assessment process	Trend results
Croatia	Assessment of 35 populations of 31 raptor species (2019), in context of reporting under EU Directives.	Trend for 26 populations assessed as unknown, due to lack of adequate long term monitoring data. For others: STABLE: Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> , Western Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> , Eleonora's Falcon <i>Falco eleonora</i> , Saker Falcon <i>F. cherrug</i> , Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> . Population sizes of all these remain small, however. DECLINING: Eastern Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i> (recovery project in progress). INCREASING: White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i> .
Finland	Assessments included in national Red List of birds, 2019.	
France	(Some) via species action plan monitoring.	All species covered by a national species action plan show positive trends. Other more widespread species are mostly in stable condition, although some of these (unspecified) are declining.
Germany	Assessments included in national Red List of breeding birds, 2021.	STABLE: European Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis apivorus</i> , Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> , Northern Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> , Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i> , Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> , Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i> , Eurasian Hobby <i>Falco subbuteo</i> , Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> , Tengmalm's Owl <i>Aegolius funereus</i> , Long-eared Owl <i>Asio otus</i> . DECLINING: Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i> , Western Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> , Montagu's Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i> , Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i> , Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i> . INCREASING: Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> , Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> , White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> .
Hungary	Assessments available from national Red List of breeding birds, 2019.	STABLE: Short-toed Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i> and Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> appear to have stabilised (at a lower population level) after a previous serious decline. DECLINING: Montagu's Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i> has seriously declined in the past two decades, due to habitat loss and degradation. Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> started to increase since its minimum in the

		1970s-80s, but this recently reversed and the species now shows a slight decline. INCREASING: White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , Eastern Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i> , Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> and Red-footed Falcon <i>F. vespertinus</i> .
Italy	Assessments included in national Red List of birds, updated 2019.	
Madagascar	Studies of Sooty Falcon <i>Falco concolor</i> .	
Morocco	Assessment of Eleonora's Falcon <i>Falco eleonora</i> .	<i>F. eleonora</i> population has increased significantly in recent years. Anecdotal information suggests Kestrels <i>F. tinnunculus</i> are also increasing.
Norway	A report by BirdLife International, commissioned by the Environment Agency.	
Pakistan	Assessments of vulture populations.	
Spain	Several assessments.	STABLE: Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> , Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> , Eleonora's Falcon <i>F. eleonora</i> , Peregrine Falcon <i>F. peregrinus</i> , Barbary Falcon <i>F. pelegrinoides</i> , Short-toed Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i> , Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> (or possibly increasing), Booted Eagle <i>Hieraetus pennatus</i> , European Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis apivorus</i> , Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i> , Northern Goshawk <i>Accipiter gentilis</i> (or possibly increasing), Eurasian Sparrowhawk <i>A. nisus</i> , Long-eared Owl <i>Asio otus</i> . DECLINING: Lesser Kestrel <i>Falco naumanni</i> , Eurasian Hobby <i>F. subbuteo</i> , Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> , Black Kite <i>M. migrans</i> , Hen Harrier <i>Circus cyaneus</i> , Montagu's Harrier <i>C. pygargus</i> , Eurasian Scops Owl <i>Otus scops</i> . INCREASING: Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> , Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> , Spanish Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila adalberti</i> , Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> , Western Marsh Harrier <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> . UNKNOWN: Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i> , Tengmalm's Owl <i>Aegolius funereus</i> , Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i> .
Switzerland	Monitoring programmes undertaken by Ornithological Institute, and summary results published in " Raptor and	See document referred to.

	Owl Conservation in Switzerland: Strategic Guidelines and Management Priorities ".	
Syria	Assessments of Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> as part of an EU LIFE-funded project.	
The Netherlands	Annual status and trends monitoring by the Dutch Raptor Working Group.	STABLE or DECLINING: Most species. INCREASING: Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> , White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> and Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> . Population sizes of all these remain small, however.
UAE	Assessments included in national Red List of birds (2020), and regular monitoring and assessment in Abu Dhabi of breeding Sooty Falcons <i>Falco concolor</i> and Ospreys <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> .	

Concerning the MOU's Cooperating Partners, BirdLife International is the international Red List authority for birds, and hence it undertakes/oversees multiple assessments in that context. It has also completed several species-specific assessments of vultures. The IUCN Vulture Specialist Group conducted assessments of all Old World vulture populations during the development of the Vulture MsAP. The Peregrine Fund has compiled an assessment of raptor population declines in Africa, as well as another study focusing specifically on Kenya.

12.2 Systematic and coordinated monitoring programmes

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Fourteen Signatories reported the existence in their countries of systematic and coordinated monitoring programmes relating to breeding populations, reproductive success or migration counts of birds of prey; with two others (Madagascar and Pakistan) indicating that such programmes were being considered for the future. Three Cooperating Partners identified programmes in which they are involved.

Some of the schemes referred to are organised by official authorities, and some are run by volunteers or non-governmental organizations (NGOs), but many involve collaboration between all of these. Where particular species or other aspects of the scope of the relevant monitoring programmes were mentioned, these are summarised in Table 7 below. Some of the reports (both from Signatories and from Cooperating Partners) provide links to further resources.

*Table 7: Programmes for monitoring numbers and/or breeding success of migratory birds of prey. *Details in this column relate to activities by BirdLife International unless otherwise stated. BirdLife also reported having coordinated a report on the state of bottleneck monitoring in the Black Sea/Rift Valley flyway, as part of a project on "Migratory Soaring Birds" (https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350689092_Monitoring_of_migratory_soaring_birds_i*

n the East AfricanEurasian flyway a review and recommendations for future steps). In addition, the IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group monitors vulture populations at various locations throughout the range of the CMS Vulture MsAP.

Country	Details - Signatories	Details – Cooperating Partners*
Austria		Monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of Eastern Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i> , Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> , Red-footed Falcon <i>F. vespertinus</i> , Montagu's Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i> , Hen Harrier <i>C. cyaneus</i> , Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> and Black Kite <i>M. migrans</i> . Winter counts of eagles, and migration counts of European Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis apivorus</i> .
Bulgaria		Monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> , Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> , Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> , Eastern Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i> and Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> . Links provided: https://www.mme.hu/heliacaevkonyv https://parlagisas.hu/hu/content/18orszagossaszinkron2021januar1517
Croatia	Monitoring breeding numbers and reproductive success of Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> , Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> and White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> . Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> is monitored as part of the Common Farmland Bird Index. Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> and Merlin <i>Falco columbarius</i> are covered by International Waterbird Census counts in winter.	Monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> , Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> , Short-toed Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i> and Eurasian Eagle Owl <i>Bubo bubo</i> .
Czech Republic		Monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of Common Buzzard <i>Buteo buteo</i> and Kestrel <i>Falco tinnunculus</i> .
Finland	Nationally coordinated monitoring of Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> , Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> and Gyr Falcon <i>F. rusticolus</i> . Links provided: https://www.environment.fi/redlist https://www.luomus.fi/en/bird-monitoring	

France	Species covered by national action plans are subject to comprehensive breeding surveys. Wintering counts of some species, e.g., Red Kites <i>Milvus milvus</i> .	
Germany	Raptors are covered by national monitoring schemes for rare and common breeding birds. Occasional more specifically targeted raptor monitoring studies, e.g., in protected areas. Several local projects monitor reproductive success, and one national project has looked at this for Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i> . Contributions are also made to data on reproductive success and mortality from bird ringing programmes, and to data on monitoring generally from the “MEROS” (Monitoring European Raptors and Owls) initiative. Link provided: https://www.dda-web.de/index.php?cat=service&subcat=vidonline&subsubcat=roteliste	
Greece		Variety of relevant work including migration counts, monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> , Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i> , Bearded Vulture <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i> and Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> , and winter counts of kites <i>Milvus</i> spp.
Hungary	Annual monitoring of breeding populations and reproductive success of key raptor species, and annual synchronised winter count. Links provided: https://www.mme.hu/heliaca-evkonyv https://parlagisas.hu/hu/content/18-orszagos-sasszinkron-2021-januar-15-17	Monitoring of breeding and/or population numbers of European Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis apivorus</i> , Black Kite <i>Milvus migrans</i> , Red Kite <i>M. milvus</i> , White-tailed Eagle <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , Short-toed Eagle <i>Circaetus gallicus</i> , Montagu's Harrier <i>Circus pygargus</i> , Levant Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter brevipes</i> , Long-legged Buzzard <i>Buteo rufinus</i> , Lesser Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> , Eastern Imperial Eagle <i>Aquila heliaca</i> , Golden Eagle <i>A. chrysaetos</i> , Booted Eagle <i>A. pennata</i> , Saker Falcon <i>Falco cherrug</i> , Peregrine Falcon <i>F. peregrinus</i> , Red-footed Falcon <i>F. vespertinus</i> , Eurasian Eagle Owl <i>Bubo</i>

		<p><i>bubo</i>, Ural Owl <i>Strix uralensis</i> and Short-eared Owl <i>Asio flammeus</i>. Winter counts of all raptor species. Links provided: https://www.mme.hu/heliacaevkonyv https://parlagisas.hu/hu/content/18orszagossasszinkron2021januar1517</p>
Italy	<p>Several networks/projects in different areas monitoring breeding numbers and reproductive success of Bearded Vulture <i>Gypaetus barbatus</i>, Griffon Vulture <i>Gyps fulvus</i>, Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i>, Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>, Lanner Falcon <i>Falco biarmicus</i>, Lesser Kestrel <i>F. naumanni</i>, Peregrine Falcon <i>F. peregrinus</i> and Red-footed Falcon <i>F. vespertinus</i>. Also regular migration counts at five bottleneck sites.</p>	
Kenya		<p>Monitoring of Ruppell's Vulture <i>Gyps rueppelli</i>. The Peregrine Fund also monitors this species in Kenya, and undertakes surveys of other raptors in the country.</p>
Luxembourg		<p>Migration counts, and monitoring breeding and/or population numbers of Red Kite <i>Milvus milvus</i>, Black Kite <i>M. migrans</i> and Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i>.</p>
Monaco	<p>Close monitoring of breeding Peregrine Falcons <i>Falco peregrinus</i>, and occasional wider surveys of birds in general.</p>	
Morocco	<p>Monitoring of White-backed Vulture <i>Gyps africanus</i>, breeding Eleonora's Falcons <i>Falco eleonora</i> and Bonelli's Eagles <i>Aquila fasciata</i>, and passage raptors in general at Jbel Moussa.</p>	
Norway	<p>National schemes (at selected sites) for Golden Eagle <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> and Eurasian Eagle Owl <i>Bubo bubo</i>. Other breeding bird surveys. Some migration counts at a few sites. Volunteer and other data collated via an online Species Observation System. Link provided: www.artsobservasjoner.no</p>	

Oman		Monitoring of Lappet-faced Vulture <i>Torgos tracheliotos</i> and Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> .
Spain	Nationally coordinated census and monitoring programmes, and migration counts in three key bottleneck areas. Links provided: https://seo.org/monografias-de-aves/ https://seo.org/monografias-de-migracion	Monitoring of Cinereous Vulture <i>Aegypius monachus</i> and Peregrine Falcon <i>Falco peregrinus</i> .
Sweden	Long running counting and reproductive success studies of migratory raptors in south-west Sweden. Additional monitoring of breeding Gyr Falcons <i>Falco rusticolus</i> , Golden Eagles <i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> and White-tailed Eagles <i>Haliaeetus albicilla</i> , the latter linked to a study on the threat from toxins.	
Switzerland	Nationwide monitoring programmes on common breeding birds, breeding birds in wetlands, colony-nesting species and rare species. Links provided: https://www.cms.int/raptors/en/document/raptor-and-owl-conservation-switzerland-strategic-guidelines-and-management-priorities-1 https://www.vogelwarte.ch/en/projects/monitoring/ https://www.vogelwarte.ch/en/atlas/home-page/ https://www.vogelwarte.ch/en/atlas/focus/a-golden-age-for-raptors-and-owls	
UAE	Regular systematic and coordinated raptor monitoring programmes, feeding into decision-making. Includes breeding sites, reproductive success, migration counts and long-term satellite tracking of e.g. Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga pomarina</i> , Egyptian Vulture <i>Neophron percnopterus</i> , Greater Spotted Eagle <i>Clanga clanga</i> , Oriental Honey Buzzard <i>Pernis ptilorhynchus</i> and Osprey <i>Pandion haliaetus</i> .	

12.3 Guidelines and protocols for monitoring

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Respondents were asked about the existence of any published guidelines or protocols concerning systematic or coordinated monitoring programmes for migratory birds of prey. Nine Signatories (Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Madagascar, Norway, Switzerland, The Netherlands and the UAE) reported that such guidelines or protocols exist in their countries. Among the other Signatories, one did not know and the remainder answered in the negative, although some of these indicated that some relevant matters are covered in more general research or monitoring guidelines, and a few Signatories suggested that guidelines or protocols relating more specifically to raptors may be developed in the future.

Germany, Switzerland and The Netherlands provided links to separate source documents. Additional information provided by others mentioned the following:

- A national grid-square sampling methodology for common species, and more specific surveys covering breeding harrier and kite species (France);
- A protocol used by National Park directorates for breeding bird censuses, applicable to 18 species of raptors covered by the MOU (Hungary);
- National guidelines relating to Golden Eagle (Norway); and
- Internal guidelines and protocols used by local authorities (UAE).

Among Cooperating Partners, BirdLife International provided links to some relevant documents pertaining to Spain, and the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group mentioned having published a [best practice manual for the safe harnessing of vultures](#) (for studies on tracking) in 2020.

12.4 Agreeing priorities for research

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

This question in the reporting format asked whether any processes exist for establishing multi-stakeholder agreement about priorities for research on issues of relevance to the conservation of birds of prey. Two Signatories responded that they did not know, and 11 reported that they had no such process, although Morocco indicated that its national raptor conservation strategy was expected to identify research priorities, and Hungary referred to discussions among raptor experts.

Among the remaining Signatories, those giving further details referred to a multi-stakeholder advisory group identifying research priorities for the Eurasian Eagle Owl *Bubo bubo* (Norway); a means for identifying environmental research priorities in general that brings together government and private sector representatives (UAE); and consideration of the issue by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in consultation with others as needed, including for a list of species for which the country has a particular responsibility (Germany).

Among Cooperating Partners, BirdLife International referred to the report it coordinated on monitoring of bottleneck sites for soaring birds in the Black Sea/Rift Valley flyway, and to assisting

with relevant prioritisation processes for vultures through the [Blueprint for the Recovery of Asia's Globally Threatened Vultures](#).

12.5 Platforms for exchange of knowledge and experience

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

The final question in this section asked about the existence of suitable platforms for exchanging knowledge, experience and information about raptor conservation. Two Signatories responded that they did not know, and six reported that they had no such platforms, in one case mentioning that much information is kept confidential to avoid appropriation or commercial misuse.

Among the remaining Signatories, those giving further details referred to various processes including conferences, working groups and publications, some of these being specific to birds of prey but others covering ornithology or nature conservation in general.

Three Cooperating Partners reported cooperating with relevant platforms, including:

- Platforms established through relevant EU LIFE-funded projects, networks of experts working on particular species, workshops, publications, and the *Movebank* (<https://www.movebank.org/cms/movebank-main>) and *eBird* (<https://ebird.org/home>) databases (cooperation from BirdLife International's Partner Organisations);
- The Global Raptor Impact Network (<https://globalraptors.org/>), which provides a databank of sightings, counts and maps (cooperation from The Peregrine Fund);
- The International Vulture Awareness Day website (<https://www.vultureday.org/>), which pools information reported from different organisations around the world (cooperation from the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group).

For future reporting cycles it may be worth considering whether more useful information might be generated from a more targeted question on this issue, focusing, for example, on the existence of specific national raptor conservation committees, working groups or equivalent bodies, and/or asking whether exchange takes place between government actors and others.

Valuable information has been provided in response to the four component parts of section 12 above. By contrast to some other parts of the reporting process, this section includes information not only on activities (research, monitoring, knowledge exchange), but also on the conservation status trends for several well-studied raptor species. As such, this contributes to the wider picture of *ecological outcomes* that is informed by separate work on indicators and assessments of various kinds. The scope for synergy between national reporting processes and other science-based processes on this may be an area to explore further in future.

13. Awareness and education

This section of the survey included questions asking about the implementation of programmes for public awareness and about the provision of education programmes and teaching resources.

13.1 Programmes for public awareness

Response rate: 16 Signatories (80 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Eleven Signatories reported having implemented public awareness programmes during the reporting period to promote the importance of birds of prey, their migration and conservation needs. One other Signatory, Morocco, indicated that it was planning to do this in due course in conjunction with its raptor conservation strategy.

Several countries referred to the role of NGOs in this context, in some cases involving collaboration with government bodies. Where detail was given, it included:

- Celebration of International Vulture Awareness Day at a zoo in the capital, a creative game for children, “meet the Griffon Vulture” events, and a brochure in Braille for blind and visually impaired people prepared as part of a project on management plans for strictly protected species (Croatia);
- Guided field visits, and involvement of volunteers in raptor monitoring and protection (Germany);
- A publication, and a winter raptor count involving volunteers (Hungary);
- Awareness activities as part of EU LIFE-funded projects (Italy);
- Public interpretation regarding a sensitive breeding site, and awareness of biodiversity generally among young people (Monaco);
- Activities linked to International Vulture Awareness Day and World Migratory Bird Day (Pakistan); and
- Events, exhibitions and press stories, including activities linked to World Migratory Bird Day (UAE).

All four Cooperating Partners also reported involvement in relevant programmes, including International Vulture Awareness Day, World Migratory Bird Day, an “Eagle Awareness Day” (in Bulgaria), nest webcams, communication campaigns, webinars, media stories and exhibitions.

There could potentially be good scope on this issue in future to build up a library of ideas and resources for sharing amongst the raptor conservation community in general.

In addition to identifying relevant programmes implemented during the reporting period, respondents were invited to comment on the impact and success (or otherwise) of these programmes. Apart from one Signatory simply mentioning that its work had been successful, no other comments were received by Signatories or Cooperating Partners. Devising methods for evaluating the impact of awareness activities can be challenging, so this may have been a difficult question to answer. It might be a more useful option in future to ask whether and how any such evaluations may have been undertaken. It may also be desirable to take the approach of the CMS national report format, which asks for an informed opinion on whether activities/programmes have had a “large positive impact”, “good impact”, “small impact”, “very little impact”, or “not known”.

13.2 Education programmes and teaching resources

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Respondents were asked about any education programmes or teaching resources that had been provided during the reporting period to inform young people and students about migratory birds of prey and their conservation. Ten Signatories and three Cooperating Partners answered affirmatively, though some noted that activities of this kind in the reporting period had been curtailed due to restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Where specifics were given, they involved a mixture of items with a focus on raptors and others relating to environmental issues more generally. Examples included:

- An ornithology course for students (including material about international agreements), and education programmes at a vulture rescue centre, at an NGO-run falconry centre, and at a National Park visitor centre focusing on White-tailed Eagles (Croatia);
- A project informing children and young people about forest birds, including the Red Kite, implemented by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation in conjunction with NGOs, who produced a “Red Kite Suitcase” containing educational materials for schools to borrow (Germany);
- Training for members of the public on raptor identification and conservation issues, organised by the national BirdLife Partner (Hungary);
- Education programmes undertaken in the framework of EU LIFE-funded projects (Italy);
- Activities in the context of World Migratory Bird Day (Madagascar);
- Field visits for schools, and a book for schools on nature conservation in general (Monaco);
- Online resources, including factsheets and games (Switzerland); and
- Education programmes and teaching resources for schools on environmental issues, including birds of prey (developed by a National Awareness Committee); and in Abu Dhabi, a Sustainable Schools Initiative (UAE).

Examples cited by Cooperating Partners included school programmes, a working group on education, presentations given to students, a raptor identification course, and production of education materials.

Overall, many Signatories appear to be positively engaged in relevant programmes for public awareness and education. Cooperating Partners have also played an important role in this, indicating that it is a useful area for collaboration between governments and NGOs. Future reporting processes might, however, usefully enquire further into the impact achieved by these activities.

14. Strengthening capacity

This section of the survey contained questions covering training and support for relevant agencies, training and other support for community groups and volunteers, and new funding or other resources, both those provided and those received.

14.1 Training and other support for relevant agencies

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Two questions were asked in this section on capacity strengthening. The first concerned training or other programmes of support that had been implemented during the reporting period to strengthen the capacity of agencies responsible for applying laws and regulations governing the conservation of birds of prey.

Nine Signatories indicated that such training or programmes had been implemented, three stated that they did not know, and the remainder responded in the negative. Of the latter, Iran cited COVID-19 as an impediment, and Syria reported that training of enforcement authorities was

planned to take place once its new hunting law was adopted. Norway and Switzerland indicated that the capacity of their relevant agencies was already adequate.

Most of the Signatories reporting implementation of training or other support for relevant agencies in the reporting period referred to programmes and activities addressing bird or nature conservation in general, rather than activities specifically focused on raptors. A range of beneficiary bodies was cited however, including protected area managers, national park rangers, CITES enforcement agencies, local authorities and the judiciary. Reference was also made to a "Wildlife Crime Academy" organised for nine European countries jointly by the Regional Government of Andalusia in Spain and the Vulture Conservation Foundation.

Three Cooperating Partners reported involvement in delivering relevant training or other support, reaching many thousands of beneficiaries across a large number of countries, including conservation departments, law enforcement agencies, veterinary staff, wildlife wardens, national park rangers, anti-poaching units, environmental inspectorates, veterinary services, the police, the judiciary, energy sector companies and hunters groups. The "Wildlife Crime Academy" referred to above was also mentioned. During the COVID-19 pandemic some delivery had been moved online.

14.2 Training and other support for community groups and volunteers

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

In the second question in this section, respondents were asked about any relevant training or other initiatives that had been implemented during the reporting period to support local communities or voluntary groups. Eight Signatories indicated that such training or support had been provided, four stated that they did not know, and the remainder responded in the negative. One of the latter pointed out the uncertain dividing-line between "awareness-raising"/"education" (covered separately in section 13 above) and "training", and further guidance on this might be worthwhile in future reporting cycles. Iran again cited COVID-19 as an impediment, while Syria reported that plans for activity in this area in future are under discussion.

Examples of community and volunteer training delivered in the period and reported by Signatories covered issues including raptor identification, nest protection, nest site monitoring and ringing of nestlings. Examples reported by Cooperating Partners included species identification, monitoring and protection of nest sites and wider important areas, monitoring of electrocution-related bird mortality, and retrofitting electricity poles.

14.3 Provision of new funding or other resources

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

Two questions were asked in this section on the mobilisation of resources: the first concerning resources provided by the respondents and the second concerning resources received by them, in each case for supporting conservation activities that specifically benefit migratory birds of prey. "Resources" were defined as covering both funding and other forms of support, such as staff time, administrative infrastructure, loan of equipment, provision of data processing facilities or technology transfer. Training or mentoring schemes and other initiatives for capacity-building however are outside the scope of this, as these are covered separately in the preceding sections 14.1 and 14.2. The present section 14.3 and the following one (14.4) are intended to focus only on new resources mobilised specifically in the reporting period.

Ten Signatories reported that they had provided relevant resources during the reporting period. Those giving further information referred to the following:

- Support for several bird rescue centres, including one specifically for Griffon Vultures; and co-financing for an EU LIFE-funded project tackling illegal wildlife poisoning (Croatia);
- Support for NGOs (France);
- staff time contributions to several relevant EU LIFE-funded projects (Italy);
- Staff and equipment to help with field surveys, and a funding call for projects to improve human-wildlife coexistence (Monaco);
- Support for a supplementary feeding station for vultures, and the establishment of two raptor rehabilitation centres (Morocco);
- Support provided to scientists and NGOs for research and equipment (Norway);
- Support for NGOs and other stakeholders (Spain);
- Provision of an annual voluntary financial contribution for the implementation of the MOU Programme of Work (Sweden); and
- The Environment Agency Abu Dhabi on behalf of the UAE government signed a renewed funding agreement to support the MOU; and the UAE established the Mohamed Bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund for supporting relevant activities worldwide, which in the reporting period included funding for Saker Falcon work in Bulgaria (UAE).

One Signatory did not know the answer to the question, and the remaining seven answered in the negative. In some of these cases, the COVID-19 pandemic or other national funding priorities were cited as obstacles. In others, there were indications that although there were no raptor-specific instances of support to report, birds of prey may benefit from support being provided for nature conservation activities in a more general sense.

Three Cooperating Partners answered affirmatively, mentioning the following:

- BirdLife International had devoted considerable staff time to work across its partnership, and had mobilised funding through public appeals and donor applications for various projects across regions, from local to multinational levels;
- The IUCN SSC Vulture Specialist Group had provided funding for a vulture harnessing manual and for a West African strategy on belief-based use of vultures, and had endorsed applications by various organisations for funding for other projects; and
- The Peregrine Fund had provided support for raptor conservation in Kenya, in the form of equipment loans, staff time and administrative infrastructure.

14.4 Receipt of new funding or other resources

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

The second question on resource mobilisation concerned resources received by the respondents, for supporting conservation of raptors. “Resources” were defined for this in the same way as in section 14.3 above, and again the focus of the question was on support received specifically in the reporting period. Five Signatories reported that they had received relevant resources in this period, citing the following:

- EU LIFE funding (unspecified) (France);
- EU LIFE funding for several projects, including “PannonEagle” (Hungary);

- EU LIFE funding for five projects, focusing on different aspects of vulture and falcon conservation (Italy);
- Funding from Small Initiatives for Civil Society Organisations in North Africa (PPI-OSCAN) provided to the Moroccan Association for the Protection of Raptors for a GPS tracking project; and funding from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) provided to BirdLife Morocco for monitoring of vultures (Morocco); and
- Funding from a variety of sources (unspecified) (Spain).

Two Signatories did not know the answer to the question, and the remaining answered in the negative. Iran noted that in its case, international sanctions were an obstacle to the transfer of funds.

Three Cooperating Partners responded affirmatively. Some sources mentioned included the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (as well as several individual zoos in the United States of America), the BAND Foundation, the Disney Conservation Fund, the EU LIFE programme, the Lion Recovery Fund, the MAVA Foundation, the National Geographic Society, the Tusk Trust, UNDP/the Global Environment Facility, the Whitley Fund for Nature and the World Wide Fund for Nature.

In addressing the questions summarised in section 14 of this report, Signatories and Cooperating Partners cited some valuable examples of training and support provided to relevant agencies, community groups and volunteers. This section also identified examples of funding and other resource support, both provided and received.

15. International cooperation

For the final section of their reports, respondents were invited to answer two questions about international cooperation.

15.1 Participation in international cooperation activities

Response rate: 18 Signatories (90 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

This first question asked about participation, during the reporting period, in any international cooperation activities “as provided by paragraph 8 of the MOU”. Paragraph 8 of the MOU lists various general conservation measures for Signatories to undertake, and it includes reference (among others) to coordinating efforts for the maintenance of a network of habitats, cooperating in emergency situations that require concerted international action, exchanging information and the results of research, and assisting each other in other ways with the implementation of the MOU.

Eleven Signatories indicated that they had participated in relevant activities, though one of these referred only to meetings that pre-dated the reporting period. Three Signatories reported that they did not know the answer, and the remainder answered in the negative.

None of the responses made a link to any of the items in paragraph 8 of the MOU. There was also no reference to activities relating to international species action plans, though these are addressed elsewhere in the reports (see sections 6 and 8.1). Where specifics were provided, they included the following:

- Participation in an EU LIFE-funded project on wildlife crime in 11 countries, mainly in Central and South-East Europe (Croatia);
- BirdLife Hungary's fieldwork in Angola concerning the Red-footed Falcon (Hungary);
- Conferences of Parties of other Conventions (raptor specifics not described) (Monaco);
- An "Atlas" project together with Spain's Regional Government of Andalusia and the IUCN Mediterranean Programme (Morocco);
- Participation in international working groups concerning Golden Eagle and Snowy Owl (Norway);
- Membership of the Regional Steering Committee of the South Asia Vulture Recovery Programme (Pakistan);
- Providing assistance with projects for the reintroduction of Bonelli's Eagle in Italy; Griffon Vulture in Bulgaria, France and Israel; Cinereous Vulture in Bulgaria and France; Red Kite in the UK; and Lesser Kestrel in Bulgaria and France (Spain);
- Participation in meetings of the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Migratory Species (raptor specifics not described) (Switzerland);
- Participation in online meetings of the MIKT initiative (Syria); and
- Support for powerline and habitat work in Mongolia, and Saker Falcon work in Bulgaria, both through the Mohamed Bin Zayed Raptor Conservation Fund (UAE).

All Cooperating Partners returned positive responses, although as with the Signatories, these did not make reference to paragraph 8 of the MOU. Items identified in the responses included general references to conferences and workshops; the Vulture MsAP Coordination Group; other species action plans; collaboration with other NGOs; participation in the Saker Falcon Task Force; the CMS Energy Task Force and the MIKT initiative; multi-country projects such as those funded by the EU LIFE programme; international collaboration with universities concerning research; and cross-border cooperation in local conservation projects between adjacent countries.

15.2 Encouraging other Range States to become Signatories to the MOU

Response rate: 19 Signatories (95 % of those reporting), 4 Cooperating Partners (100 % of those reporting).

A last question asked about any steps taken during the reporting period to encourage non-Signatory Range States to sign the Raptors MOU. Although this section of the report also asked for information about the nature of any relevant encouragement or support that had been given, none of the Signatories or Cooperating Partners answered that part of the question.

Four Signatories reported that they had provided relevant encouragement but two of these referred only to countries that had already become Signatories many years ago. Of the remaining two, Germany reported that it was planning a meeting with the Russian Federation, and the UAE cited its general encouragement of Member States in the context of the Gulf Cooperation Council. Some of the Signatories answering "no" explained that they had no operational contacts with relevant Range States.

It might assist targeted answering of this question if the future reporting format were to be accompanied by a list of those Range States that are non-Signatories at the time of issuing the format on each occasion.

Among the Cooperating Partners, BirdLife International considered that its encouragement may have helped to secure Ethiopia's signature of the MOU in the reporting period; while the IUCN Vulture Specialist Group reported having raised the issue in the context of the Vulture MsAP, in the presence of non-Signatory Range States Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Uganda and Zambia.

Positive examples of international cooperation have been provided in response to the two questions in this section. Given the centrality of such cooperation for the MOU, it may be useful to consider how the reporting process in future can deliver the most useful information on this, including potentially a stronger focus on the specific elements identified in paragraph 8 of the MOU.

ANNEX I
LIST OF SIGNATORIES SUBMITTING REPORTS

AFRICA

Cote d'Ivoire
Ethiopia
Madagascar
Morocco

ASIA

Iran
Pakistan
Syrian Arab Republic
United Arab Emirates

EUROPE

Croatia
Finland
France
Germany
Hungary
Italy
Monaco
Netherlands
Norway
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland