



**COUNCIL OF
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INFORMATION NOTE

from:	General Secretariat
to:	Delegations
Subject:	Outcome of the First Meeting of the Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 9-11 December 2012) - Information from the Presidency and the Commission

Delegations will find in the Annex an information from the Presidency and the European Commission on the abovementioned subject.

**Outcome of the First Meeting of the Signatories of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia (Raptors MoU) under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)
(Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, 9-11 December 2012)**

- Information from the Presidency and the Commission -

From the EU, the Commission, six Signatory Member States (DE, UK, HU, RO, SK, FR) and CY were present at the meeting. Croatia also attended the meeting.

The First Meeting of the Raptors MoU Signatories ran smoothly and ended up successfully. The Signatories, observers, Chair of the meeting, staff of the Interim Coordinating Unit and other CMS staff hold constructive and fruitful discussions which led to outcomes that will contribute to the conservation of migratory birds of prey. From an EU perspective it is worth to underline that the main achievement was the set-up of overall administrative and technical arrangements that allow a dynamic Coordinating Unit team to develop more quickly the MoU implementation process. It is expected that this MoU will now more effectively contribute to foster international cooperation to protect migratory birds of prey in Europe, Asia and Africa and will thereby contribute to EU policy objectives both within the EU and internationally. EU amendments to the Rules of Procedure were taken on board. An IISD summary report is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb1852e.pdf>.

The most important outcomes of this meeting were:

- Establishment of a Coordinating Unit (CU) for the MoU within the UNEP/CMS Office in Abu Dhabi. This outcome is the consolidation of the former Interim Coordinating Unit in line with the offer by the Environment Agency Abu Dhabi on behalf of the government of the UAE. The UAE will ensure continuation until 2015 and probably 2018. In EU coordination, DE announced to be ready to host the CU in Bonn in the future if it is no longer possible to maintain it in the UAE.
- Rules of procedure (RoP) were adopted, including arrangements for future Meetings of the Signatories and procedures for amending the MoU text and its Annexes.

- Contributions from Signatories to be done on a voluntary basis, including in-kind support and/or short-term staff loans. The CU will also look for funds from private sources. The CU will develop a suite of project proposals and circulate these annually to Signatories and others seeking sponsorship.
- A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to support the implementation of the MoU was created with a programme to get it functioning and tasks to be addressed. Their list of activities will be drafted by the TAG. The CU will provide a full financial breakdown for the activities proposed by TAG. Three EU MS (UK, HU, RO) proposed three candidates to fulfil the two vacancies for Europe in the Advisory Committee plus one extra vacancy for other invited experts.
- Signatories are expected to submit their national or regional raptor conservation strategies within 18 months (by June 2014).
- Signatories agreed to do regular reporting on the implementation of the MoU. Details, including the appropriate format, will be elaborated by the TAG to be proposed to the Signatories. The EU stated that reporting requirements should be light to avoid time-consuming work at a time when administrations face serious resource constraints. Moreover, the EU underlined that a simple process is more in line with the legally non-binding nature of the MoU. In EU coordination, MS expressed preference for reporting format on the basis of the Birds Directive Article 12 reporting obligations in order to avoid duplication of work.
- A procedure to select and accept Cooperating Partners as Signatories was adopted. It also clarifies their role and responsibility.
- Signatories endorsed CMS Resolution 10.11 on power lines and migratory birds.
- Somalia and Niger signed the Raptors MoU, bringing the number of Signatories to 42 (41 Range States and the EU).

A number of international projects were discussed, including:

- Capacity building and field work for the conservation of the Egyptian Vulture in Sudan and Chad, with assistance from BG;
- Development of a Saker Falcon Global Action Plan, including a management and monitoring system, with the EU contribution fully acknowledged and very welcome;

- Field work for the conservation of the Sooty Falcon in Madagascar, with the assistance of UAE/Oman;
- NGO-led work against large-scale shooting of migrating birds in Lebanon.

Raptor conservation-related work that had recently been carried out by the CMS Secretariat and/or Raptors CU was presented, in particular:

- Collaboration with India to halt the unsustainable large-scale harvest of Amur Falcon during migration;
- CMS working group on poisoning, which has been dormant for one year since its inception after CMS COP 10 and is now scheduled to resume in 2013.

No offers have been made so far to host the next meeting (MoS2), which is likely to be held in three years' time (2015).

At another meeting that took place in Abu Dhabi after the Raptors MoS1, the Range States of the Central Asian Flyway (CAF) region came together to decide on the way forward for the legal and institutional framework for the CAF Action Plan for the Conservation of Migratory Waterbirds. The meeting unanimously agreed that the preferred option would be to include the CAF under the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). The delegates issued a declaration requesting the Parties to AEWA to consider extending the geographic area of that Agreement to encompass the entire CAF region and to take responsibility for the CAF Waterbird Action Plan. In accordance with the outcome of the CMS Future Shape process the extension of the agreement area would be preferable to the development of a new agreement.

The Presidency and the Commission would like to thank all delegates and experts, participating and actively engaging in preparation of the EU positions for this meeting, for their constructive collaboration and support which resulted in fruitful discussions and delivering common decisions that will contribute to biodiversity protection and conservation.