

**Global biodiversity mechanisms:
a thematic review of recent developments and future evidence needs**

Strand Palace Hotel, London 20th May 2009

MEA Briefing

**Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory
Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia**

May 2009

Visit: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/MEA-event>



**Global biodiversity mechanisms:
a thematic review of recent developments and future evidence needs**

Strand Palace Hotel, London 20th May 2009

Briefing note: Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia

First negotiating meeting (2007): the UK and United Arab Emirates (UAE) have jointly led an initiative to develop a new international treaty agreement to help conserve migratory birds of prey and owls in the Africa-Eurasian region. This followed decisions by the World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls (Budapest 2003) and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS, Nairobi 2005) calling for action to tackle the threats faced by these birds.

The initiative was underpinned by a study commissioned by DEFRA in 2005 which found that more than half of migratory birds of prey in the African-Eurasian region have a poor conservation status and many are showing rapid or long-term population declines. A variety of human-induced threats are causing problems such as habitat loss and degradation, illegal shooting and poisoning, collisions with aerial structures and electrocution by power lines. Climate change will add to these problems.

A meeting to identify and elaborate an option for international cooperation on African-Eurasian migratory raptors under CMS was held in Loch Lomond, Scotland, from 22-25 October 2007. It was co-sponsored by DEFRA, Scottish Natural Heritage, the Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi (EAD) and CMS. This successful meeting negotiated text for a Memorandum of Understanding under the CMS and an associated Action Plan¹.

Second and final negotiating meeting (2008): a second meeting to conclude the MoU on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia was held in Abu Dhabi, UAE from 20 – 22 October 2008² and was co-hosted by the Governments of UAE and UK. A total of 42 potential Signatories were represented. The MOU and Action Plan³ were adopted by consensus on 21 October having first been revised to take account of the generous offer of UAE to host an interim Co-ordination Unit for the MoU (as part of a package of UAE support for CMS).

The Agreement area stretches across more than 130 countries from the African, Afrotropical, Palearctic and Indo-Malayan realms. More than 70 species of migratory birds of prey - Falconiformes, ospreys, eagles and owls - are included within the scope of the MoU.

The Action Plan agrees to foresee more research on species ecology and migratory behaviour, patterns and routes as well as data analysis. Collective efforts towards monitoring and establishing reliable population trends will be important to reveal the impacts of threats and necessary mitigation actions. Capacity building and training in institutions and local communities by developing knowledge of birds of prey will be important to create acceptance for necessary conservation actions.

¹ See papers and final meeting report at www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/raptors/raptor_meeting.htm

² The final report of the Negotiating Meeting MoP is available at: www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/birdsofprey/Abu_Dhabi_Meeting/report_of_the_meeting_050109.pdf.

³ The final text of the MoU and Action Plan is at: http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/birds_preym.htm.