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**T-PVS (2016) 18**

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Standing Committee**

36<sup>th</sup> meeting  
Strasbourg, 15-18 November 2016

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**Workshop on recovery and reintroduction of  
the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)**

28 June 2016  
Paris, Council of Europe Office

**- CONCLUSIONS –**

*Secretariat Memorandum  
prepared by  
the Directorate of Democratic Governance*

The Standing Committee is invited to:

- Take note of the report of the meeting of the Select Group of Experts;
- Take note of the Plan for the Conservation and Recovery of Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean [document T-PVS/Inf (2016) 12];
- Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the draft recommendation on the implementation of a Plan for the Conservation and Recovery of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean (in appendix 3 to this report and also document T-PVS (2016) 19).

## **1. OBJECTIVES OF THE MEETING AND EXPECTED RESULTS**

The Secretariat explained that the purpose of the meeting was mainly to agree on the changes that should be introduced in a “Draft Action Plan for Osprey in Europe and the Mediterranean Region in particular” prepared by the consultant, Mr Roy Dennis, taking into account the comments received.

## **2. EXAMINATION OF THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT EUROPEAN ACTION PLAN FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE OSPREY (*PANDION HALIAETUS*) IN EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN REGION, AND OF COMMENTS PROVIDED TO THE 2<sup>ND</sup> DRAFT EUROPEAN ACTION PLAN FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE OSPREY, INCLUDING THOSE BROUGHT BY BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL - DISCUSSION**

The participants presented – non exhaustively – some of the work on osprey conservation and recovery being done in their different States.

Switzerland had adopted a 4-year programme, started some test reintroductions and artificial nests were built in areas where natural recovery is expected, even if the species is not considered a priority. Spain had carried many successful introductions in South Spain and the Basque country and was considering new ones in the Region of Valencia. France was deciding on the possible adoption of a national action plan while the species was slowly but surely colonising the Loire Valley and Central France and the situation in Corsica remained critical as a result of impacts on breeding nests by uncontrolled tourism. In the United Kingdom, reintroduction projects were continuing, focusing on salt marshes in the South Coast. Italy was noting progress of the population in Tuscany and artificial nests were being prepared in Sardinia to facilitate possible colonisation of birds from Corsica.

The Group agreed on some guidelines for the improvement of the plan:

- a. The plan is not to be called an “Action Plan” in the European Union sense as it does not pretend to be comprehensive or repeat all conservation measures needed by the species already contained in other similar plans (those of CMS and others).
- b. The objective of the Plan is to build in less than 20 years sustainable breeding populations in the whole of the European and Mediterranean space of the Convention, aiming at full range recovery as this will make the species more resilient to future changes in climate, pollution and food supply.
- c. A new title was proposed for the report: Plan for the Conservation and Recovery of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean Region.
- d. Co-operation among States was essential for the survival of this migratory species, particularly with States that hold wintering population, including African States.
- e. The focus of the Plan would be laid on the recovery of breeding populations in Contracting Parties that had lost them in historical times because of human persecution but on which good habitat is still present.
- f. Reintroduction projects should, as appropriate, be complemented with habitat management, elimination of threats from powerlines, and preparation of appropriate sites for possible nesting of expanding breeding populations.
- g. Range expansion can be fostered by either measures for natural recovery (including forestry, artificial nests, etc.) or reintroductions. States that are invited to consider measures for natural recovery or reintroductions include all South-East Europe: Turkey, Cyprus, Portugal, Spain, Mediterranean France, Italy and those of Central and Eastern Europe with now very small breeding populations: Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Czech Republic and Slovak Republic.
- h. In areas where breeding populations are expanding naturally priority should be given to ensure appropriate habitat management (of both aquatic ecosystem where ospreys feed and forest ecosystems where they often nest) and the preparation, if needed, of suitable nests.
- i. Reintroduction projects should take into account genetic considerations using the most appropriate stock and keep records of the genetic origin of all birds.

- j. The conservation and recovery of the species should be linked to the conservation of European and Mediterranean aquatic ecosystems and to awareness on their importance for biodiversity and people. In that sense the osprey acts like a “flagship” species for those ecosystems. The species, because it is both iconic and spectacular, has a great awareness potential.
- k. A map showing States where the species went extinct in the last 300 years will help understand the status of the species and the need to further natural recovery or re-introductions.
- l. It would be important that the Plan both takes into account other international efforts (such as those of CMS) and encourages co-ordination with other relevant conventions.

### **3. NEXT STEPS**

The Secretariat and BirdLife International will produce a new draft by 15 July, which will be circulated to all members of the Select Group of Experts for last corrections.

The report will be presented to the Bureau of the Bern Convention in September 2016, in view of a formal presentation for endorsement (and adoption of a recommendation) at the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Standing Committee to the Bern Convention in November 2016.

### **4. OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was raised.

## Appendix 1



6 June 2016



T-PVS (2016) 16

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE  
AND NATURAL HABITATS

### **Meeting of a Select Group of Experts on the European Action Plan for the recovery of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*)**

Paris, Council of Europe Office, Room 2  
28 June 2016 (09:00 – 17:30)

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## **AGENDA**

- 1. Objectives of the meeting and expected results**
- 2. Examination of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft European Action Plan for the recovery of the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean Region, and of comments provided to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Draft European Action Plan for the recovery of the Osprey, including those brought by BirdLife International - Discussion**
- 3. Next steps**
- 4. Other business**

**Appendix 2****LIST OF PARTICIPANTS / LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS****I. EXPERTS / EXPERTS**

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*[Apologised for absence / Excusé]*

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**Appendix 3**

Convention on the Conservation  
of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats

Standing Committee

**Draft Recommendation No. ... (2016) of the Standing Committee, adopted on ... , on the implementation of a Plan for the conservation and recovery of the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean region in particular**

The Standing Committee to the Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats, acting under Article 14 of the convention,

Having regard to the aims of the convention, which are to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats;

Recalling that the convention gives particular emphasis to the conservation of endangered and vulnerable species, especially endemic ones, and endangered habitats;

Recalling that Article 4.1 of the convention requires Parties to take appropriate and necessary legislative and administrative measures to ensure the conservation of the habitats of the wild flora and fauna species, especially those specified in Appendices I and II, and the conservation of endangered natural habitats;

Recalling its Recommendations No. 48 (1996) on the conservation of European globally threatened birds; No. 60 (1997) on the implementation of the actions plans for globally threatened birds in Europe; No. 62 (1997) on the conservation of regionally threatened birds in the Macaronesian and Mediterranean regions; No. 75 (1999) on the implementation of new action plans for globally threatened birds in Europe; No. 88 (2001) on the implementation of five new Action Plans for globally threatened birds in Europe; No. 92 (2002) on sixteen new Action Plans for most threatened birds in the Convention's area; and No. 103 (2003) on five new Action Plans for most threatened birds in the Convention's area; No. 121 (2006) of the Standing Committee on the implementation of six new action plans for most threatened birds in the Convention's area; No. 156 (2011) on the implementation of an Action Plan for the conservation of the White-tailed Sea Eagle (*Haliaeetus albicilla*) along the Danube; No. 165 (2013) on the implementation of twenty-one new or revised action plans for most threatened birds in the Convention's area;

Stressing that the osprey is one of Europe's most iconic species, and that the distribution of its breeding population on the continent has been greatly influenced by humans as it was presented, resulting in its extinction in no less than fifteen Contracting Parties;

Aware that the species is classified as Least Concern (LC) by the IUCN, although this relates to the state of the populations in the northern countries;

Referring to the Plan for the conservation and recovery of the osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*) in Europe and the Mediterranean Region presented in document T-PVS/Inf (2016) 12;

Noting that range recovery would be highly beneficial to European ospreys as a larger and more widespread population would reduce the species' vulnerability to future changes in weather, climate, contamination and variations in food supply;



Aware of the need to address the absence or low numbers of breeding ospreys in the central southern half of Europe and to investigate the decline of the species to reverse it where it happens,

Recommends Contracting Parties and invites observer States to the Convention:

1. Draw-up and implement national action plans or other relevant measures, as appropriate, on the osprey, taking into account the plan mentioned above;
2. Consider reinforcement of populations or re-introduction of the species, as appropriate, in areas where breeding population of ospreys went extinct (Mediterranean Region, South-East Europe and parts of Central and Eastern Europe);
3. Keep the Standing Committee informed of the implementation of the present Recommendation.

## **Appendix 4**

### **ACTIONS MENEES SUR LE BALBUZARD EN FRANCE (NOTAMMENT DANS LES FORETS DOMANIALES)**

#### **LE BALBUZARD PECHEUR EN FRANCE – PLAN PANEUROPEEN**

Orléans, 8 juillet 2016

#### **BREF HISTORIQUE**

Le Balbuzard pêcheur avait disparu, comme espèce nicheuse, de France continentale au début du 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle. En revanche, la population insulaire de Corse a toujours été présente mais a failli disparaître au début des années 70 ; il subsistait seulement 4 couples en 1974 (Thibault et al. 2001)...

L'espèce s'est réinstallée spontanément en France continentale, comme espèce nicheuse, en 1984, en Forêt d'Orléans (Lemarchand et al. 2013). Actuellement, la population française continentale est estimée à plus de 40 couples, celle de Corse à 38 couples (MEEDDAT 2009 ; LPO Mission rapaces 2012 ; Recorbet 2016).

En France, le Balbuzard pêcheur fait officiellement partie des espèces protégées depuis janvier 1972. Le ministère chargé de l'Environnement, outre la création de la réserve naturelle marine de Scandola (Corse) en 1975, a mis en place deux plans nationaux d'actions en faveur de l'espèce, déclinés en région Centre et en Corse entre 1999 et 2012 (Plan national d'action 2009/ DREAL Centre - Mission Rapaces LPO).

#### **CONNAISSANCE ET CONSERVATION**

Outre le baguage systématique des jeunes rapaces au nid (CRBPO-Muséum national), de nombreuses études scientifiques ont été réalisées depuis le retour de l'espèce en forêt d'Orléans ; les principaux résultats ont été présentés lors du colloque international d'Orléans en septembre 2013. Une plaquette de vulgarisation, éditée pour le colloque d'Orléans, fait la synthèse des recherches et actions de conservation entreprises depuis plus de 30 ans.

Les principales actions de protection de l'espèce ont consisté à surveiller les nids, à installer des plates-formes artificielles sur certains massifs forestiers (principalement en Forêt domaniale) et sur des pylônes électriques en Sologne, à restaurer ou à consolider des aires naturelles, à sensibiliser le public et les gestionnaires et à garantir la tranquillité des aires, tant en forêt domaniale que sur les falaises littorales de Corse (notoirement insuffisant en Corse).

En forêt domaniale, l'Office national des Forêts (ONF) mène une gestion appropriée des boisements pour la protection des grands rapaces et a mis en place des prescriptions spécifiques, en préservant des îlots de vieux arbres, en limitant les activités forestières autour des aires et en créant un périmètre de protection sur les sites de nidification, salutaires pour la population régionale de balbuzards.

A l'échelle européenne, la réintroduction du Balbuzard pêcheur dans le Parc naturel régional de la Maremma (Toscane/Italie) a été réalisée à partir de 12 poussins provenant de nids de la Réserve naturelle marine de Scandola et avec la collaboration étroite du Parc Naturel régional de Corse.

#### **PROJETS ET PERSPECTIVES**

En région Centre Val de Loire, en 2016, un important programme de sensibilisation a été mis en place par l'ONF, Loiret Nature Environnement, le Réseau de Transport d'Electricité (Rte) et le Muséum des sciences naturelles, dans l'esprit du Plan Paneuropéen. Il est prévu un programme d'études écoéthologiques, des animations multimédias et un module muséographique spécifique dans le Muséum d'Orléans, en cours de rénovation.

Aujourd'hui un troisième plan d'action a été sollicité par la LPO et les ONG naturalistes locales, auprès du Ministère chargé de l'Ecologie, pour continuer les actions en faveur du Balbuzard pêcheur, et notamment pour accompagner l'espèce dans les autres régions où elle est susceptible de s'installer. Aucune réintroduction n'est prévue. Une protection accrue est demandée aux autorités et au Parc

Naturel de Corse pour garantir la quiétude suffisante aux couples installés de la Réserve naturelle de Scandola, constamment dérangés pendant la nidification.

L'ensemble des partenaires du plan d'action considère que la protection dynamique du Balbuzard représente bien plus que la sauvegarde d'un rapace remarquable mais que, bien au-delà, celui-ci constitue un symbole de la préservation de la biodiversité des milieux aquatiques (eau douce et marines) et de la naturalité forestière.

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