

Regional Workshop on Mainstreaming Migratory Soaring Birds? Considerations in the Energy Sector

Title

Under the patronage of the Egyptian Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs/Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and on behalf of the BirdLife International / UNDP-GEF Migratory Soaring Birds project, and BirdLife national Egyptian partner –Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE) – is proud to announce the launching of the Regional Workshop on Mainstreaming Migratory Soaring Birds' Considerations in the Energy Sector. The regional workshop will be held from Sunday 16 to Monday 17 December 2012 at the SOFITEL MAADI TOWERS hotel Cairo, Egypt. The workshop will bring together leading experts from both the energy and nature conservation sectors to tackle bird mortality in energy infrastructure in the Middle East Region. They will be discussing best approaches to minimizing risks to birds along this globally important flyway from the energy sector. Experts and representatives from several Middle Eastern and African governmental organisations as well as from various international development banks will be participating. The [Migratory Soaring Birds \(MSB\) project](#) will present during the workshop the new tools it has developed to address the potential impacts of the energy sector on birds. This includes an online sensitivity mapping tool which provides guidance on the sensitivity of area to development based on their significance to bird migration. The Rift Valley/Red Sea flyway is the second most important flyway for migratory soaring birds (raptors, storks, pelicans and some ibis) in the world, with over 1.5 million birds of 37 species, including 5 globally threatened species. Energy demands on this flyway are rapidly increasing, with renewable sources such as wind and solar anticipated to contribute in a significant way to fulfilling these demands. This will lead to a significant increase in the amount of infrastructure already present, both in Egypt itself and across the flyway. The MSB project fully supports the transition to renewable energy and recognises it as one of the main contributions to tackle climate change. However, this transition must avoid harm to ecosystems and biodiversity. One of the major environmental concerns over the use of renewable energy sources is their huge demand for space and potential impact on biodiversity. The MSB project strongly believes that coexistence between renewable energy sources with birds and other biodiversity is possible if the appropriate measures are taken to avoid, reduce and mitigate risks to birds.