Project Title: *Egyptian Vulture New LIFE - Urgent Action to strengthen the Balkan Population of the Egyptian Vulture and Secure Its Flyway*

Regions and Countries:

Balkans: Bulgaria, Greece, Macedonia and Albania

Middle East: Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Egypt

Africa: Ethiopia, Niger. Nigeria and Chad

Donor(s): European Union

Focal Area: Balkans, Middle East and Africa

Duration: 2017-2022

Amount of Financing: Overall 5,848,458 Euro (maximum EU Contribution 4,386,343)

Birdlife Africa Budget: 628,641 Euro

Collaborators:

Coordinator: Bulgarian Society for the protection of birds

Associated Beneficiaries:

- Hellenic Ornithological Society/BirdLife Greece,
- WWF Greece
- RSPB
- Birdlife Turkey
- Birdlife Middle East
- **Birdlife Africa**
- A.P. Leventis Ornithological and Research Institute
- CMS Raptors MOU
- Green Balkans

Project Description:

i)   Goal
Reinforce the easternmost population of the Egyptian Vulture in Europe by delivering urgent conservation measures towards eliminating major known threats in the breeding grounds and along the flyway in Mediterranean, Africa and Middle East (With the involvement of 14 countries in Africa and the Middle East

ii)   Objectives

Key Specific Objectives:

a) Reduce adult mortality through:
- Minimizing loss of adults due to deliberate or accidental poisoning and electrocution and collisions with energy infrastructures in the breeding grounds
- Eliminating safe food availability as a limiting factor in the breeding grounds
- Mitigating threats – reducing losses due to poisoning, direct persecution, electrocution at bottleneck and congregation sites along the flyway

b) Reinforce the breeding population on the Balkans by deploying a targeted pilot restocking programme to boost population recovery
c) Increase awareness of and support for Egyptian vulture conservation through relevant stakeholder's engagement.

iii)   Activities

- **Reduce adult mortality through:**

  a) Investigating the impact of agriculture chemicals and identifying poisoning agents and evaluate the use of veterinary drugs to inform response strategy
  b) Lobbying to secure appropriate changes of legislation regarding the use of dangerous pesticides and vet medicine products
  c) Develop local action plans against wildlife poisoning
  d) Test for alternative methods to reduce human-wildlife conflict that trigger Egyptian vulture persecution
  e) Establish a pan-Balkan network of stakeholders against wildlife poisoning
  f) Evaluate the magnitude of damages to Egyptian vulture due to poisoning, electrocution and illegal killing along the flyway
  g) Establish controlled local carcass dumps to support not-territorial birds at key sites
  h) Test alternatives to use of strychinine or other poisons to control rabies at key congregation sites in the wintering grounds in Africa
  i) Reduce loss of individuals die to power generation and power supply (wind turbine collision and electrocution)
  j) Develop local capacity to combat illegal killing and trafficking of birds along the flyway

- **Establish the basis for the recovery of the Balkan breeding population through tailored restocking strategy:**
  a) Establish Balkan Egyptian vulture captive breeding pool to reinforce the breeding population in Bulgaria and Greece
  b) Develop and pilot restocking strategy for the Balkans

- **Increase awareness of support for Egyptian vulture conservation through relevant stakeholder's engagement:**
  a) Conduct ethnographic study guided by a communication strategy and public awareness campaigns. The knowledge and attitudes of key stakeholders in representative areas to Egyptian Vultures will be initially registered and carefully monitored.
  b) Campaign to communicate main threats to the species to local communities and general public in key countries along the flyway
  c) Campaign to engage with prospective supporters

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