

Transfer of Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* from Appendix I to Appendix II

Proponent: Canada

Summary: The Peregrine Falcon *Falco peregrinus* is a falcon in the order Falconiformes with a global distribution encompassing over 200 range States across the Americas, Africa, Asia, Australasia and Europe. It was included in Appendix I in 1977. Currently all Falconiformes other than those in Appendix I are in Appendix II.

The extent of occurrence is now estimated to be nearly 40 million km², and a very preliminary estimate of the global population size is 230,000 to 440,000 mature individuals, although further validation of this estimate is needed, and previous estimates placed it closer to 90,000 mature individuals¹. The population overall is said to be stable, having undergone an increase in North America and increasing in Europe. There are some regional exceptions to the general global trend of stable or increasing populations. In Turkey, populations decreased over the decade from 1990 to 2000 while in central Europe some small sub-populations have not recovered from earlier declines. The global population was classified by BirdLife for the IUCN Red List as being of Least Concern (2015).

Falco peregrinus underwent severe declines in the mid-20th century owing to the widespread use at that time of pesticides containing dichloro-diphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT) which reduced the reproductive success, leading to a significant reduction in its distribution and extirpations of some populations². Re-introduction programmes and restrictions on pesticide use in some areas of its range have allowed the species to recover², although significant further efforts are needed to fully restore the species across its former range¹. Current factors impacting *F. peregrinus* populations are likely to include environmental toxins, habitat destruction and alteration, illegal killing and take from the wild.

The species is traded internationally for falconry, and also for re-introduction purposes. According to the CITES Trade Database, between 2000 and 2014 a total of 4674 live *F. peregrinus* were traded, the majority declared as captive-bred (source code C/D = 3667 birds). During the same time period, 665 wild birds were exported, mainly for the purpose of re-introduction or introduction into the wild, with a smaller number for personal use. Illegal trade of wild *F. peregrinus* does occur, but is not significant in relation to the population size³.

The commercial captive-breeding of raptors in general is of growing economic importance. Much of this growth has come from producers in the United Kingdom, Germany, and other European countries supplying Middle Eastern consumers who are driving both the demand and prices worldwide; some Middle Eastern countries are becoming major producers in addition to being large centres of demand⁴. Currently the global commercial demand for *F. peregrinus* is very largely met by captive-bred birds although some are reportedly taken from the wild for domestic use in consumer countries including Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates⁴. Such take is often illegal.

A survey of 21 current key trading countries found that all (with the possible exception of Mongolia) had controls on wild-take of *F. peregrinus* and falconry either through specific regulation or more general wildlife regulations. The Supporting Statement and Information Document submitted by Canada contain more detailed information on national regulation. At least 13 of the countries do not currently permit wild-harvest. Most of the key trading countries indicated that national-level controls would not change as a result of a transfer of *F. peregrinus* to Appendix II⁵. However, responses were not received from some countries which are large exporters/importers (e.g. Kazakhstan, Japan).

There may be some demand in international trade for wild birds following a transfer to Appendix II, as breeders look for new bloodlines and falconers become interested in obtaining them because they were previously unavailable in trade^{3,6}. However, all major consuming countries are also range States where it appears in general that domestic regulations concerning take from the wild would be unlikely to change following a transfer to Appendix II.

Analysis: The available information indicates that *Falco peregrinus* does not meet the biological criteria for inclusion in Appendix I: it has an extremely wide distribution and a large and stable population.

Regarding the precautionary measures outlined in Annex 4 of Res. Conf. 9.24 (Rev. CoP16), it is likely that a transfer will stimulate trade in wild *F. peregrinus*. However, the impact on the wild population as a whole will

likely be minimal, as there is already a well-established captive-breeding trade which is able to largely satisfy current market demands.

Given the species is present in over 200 countries it is hard to determine whether management and appropriate enforcement and compliance controls in each is such that Parties can be satisfied with implementation by the range States of Article IV. However, the majority of current key trading countries indicated that national-level controls would not change as a result of a transfer of *F. peregrinus* to Appendix II. The species is unlikely to enter commercial trade from the great majority of range States. It seems likely, therefore, that precautionary measures are met in the greater part of the range and would be proportionate to the anticipated risks to the species.

Reviewers: R. Watson.

References:

Information not referenced in the Summary section is from the Supporting Statement.

¹ BirdLife International. (2015) *Falco peregrinus*. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species 2015. Viewed on 20th May 2016.

² Brown J. W., Van Coeverden De Groot, P.J., Birt, T.P., Seutin, G., Boag, P.T. & Friesen, V.L. (2007) Appraisal of the consequences of the DDT-induced bottleneck on the level and geographic distribution of neutral genetic variation in Canadian peregrine falcons, *Falco peregrinus*. *Molecular Ecology* 16:327-343.

³ Reuter, A. (2016) *In litt.* to the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses Team, Cambridge, UK.

⁴ Cade, T. & Berry, R. B. (2016) The influence of propagating birds of prey on falconry and raptor conservation. *In* K.Gersmann, K.H., Grimm, O and Schmoelcke, U. Modern Falconry and Bird Symbolism--Interdisciplinary and Practical Considerations. *Manuscript in preparation*.

⁵ CITES (2016) Supplementary Information on Peregrine Falcon - Submitted by Canada. CoP17 Information document.

⁶ Cade, T. (2016) *In litt.* to the IUCN/TRAFFIC Analyses Team, Cambridge, UK.