INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON VULTURES & VETERINARY DRUGS

19-20 FEBRUARY 2019
DADIA, GREECE
08. February 2019

Announcing the European Vulture Conference, 1-4 October 2019

For four days in October we will be bringing together scientists, conservationists and the public in the Algarve, Portugal for an international congress looking at the latest research and conservation of vultures in Europe and beyond, in our first European Vulture Conference.

Save the date
We are currently putting the finishing touches to the programme and will be opening the abstract submission process in the coming weeks, and opening registration within the next month. But until then, mark your diaries for the European Vulture Conference. The conference will consist of three days of presentations, discussions and workshops followed by a field trip on the fourth day.

European Vulture Conference
Dates: Tuesday 1 - Friday 4 October
Venue: NAU Salgados Palace
Location: Albufeira in the Algarve, Portugal
Raptor / vulture tracking survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. Completing your responses should only take 6-10 minutes once the relevant information is collated from your records.

https://goo.gl/forms/jLLWxd3KsIoSfXh2

3a. Main Results

- 53 respondents deployed transmitters in 49 countries on 4,687 individuals from 71 species

- 65 (1.39%) cases of negative effects in 18 species

- Number of cases of negative effects per method:
  - Leg-loop: 1,518
  - Back pack: 3,146
  - Patagial: 40
  - Tail-mount: 40
  - Leg-mount: 64

- Types of negative effects:
  - Leg-loop: Abrasion (1), partial detachment (1), entangled (1)
  - Back pack: Entangled (5), abrasion (2), partial detachment (1), tattered, and thread removed
  - Patagial: Entangled (2), abrasion (2), partial detachment (1), tattered, and thread removed
  - Tail-mount: Entangled (2), abrasion (1), partial detachment (1), tattered, and thread removed
  - Leg-mount: Entangled (2), abrasion (2), partial detachment (1), tattered, and thread removed
European vulture mortality database

2883 cases from 15 countries
CASES PER COUNTRY

- Austria
- Bosnia & Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- France
- FYR Macedonia
- Germany
- Greece
- Italy
- Portugal
- Serbia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Switzerland
- The Netherlands
Objectives of the workshop

- Knowledge exchange to inform best practice and identify priorities
- Identify widely used veterinary products
- Review current sampling and analysis protocols
- Inform LIFE Re-Vultures After-Life plan
Threats

- Collisions
- Electrocutions
- Pathogens
- Veterinary Drugs
- Poisoning
- Lack of Food
- Illegal Killing
POISONING vs Vet Drugs

Impact per species (Spain 1992-2013):

• Bearded vulture: 35
• Egyptian vulture: 305
• Cinereous vulture: 609
• Griffon vulture: 1656

(Spain, France 2010-2018)

Flunixin – 3 griffon vultures
Euthanasian agents - xxxxx
Vet drugs and vultures

• Not the most urgent and important threat to vultures in Europe
• Nevertheless, an issue, for which we have relatively limited information (may be more important than what we know)
• Need more research, monitoring, analysis, data, etc
• In order of priority and importance

NSAIDs    mortality cases, lethal levels
Euthanasia agents
Antibiotics
Antiparasitics    residues present, non lethal levels
Vultures & vet drugs – the essentials

- Collaboration and information exchange between vets and vulture conservationists. Training of vets on impacts of vet drugs on wildlife.
- Protocols on how to sample, store and analyse dead vultures and carcasses. Existing protocols: VCF, Cost project, etc.

- Dead Vultures give more data and potential for research (Liver/kidney/brain/stomach content for toxicology, vet drugs, heavy metals, histology). Necropsy/post mortem essential step, can direct and inform analysis.

- Live animals provide less - blood samples and swabs, more immediate but less comprehensive picture.

- Animal carcasses in supplementary feeding sites and/or wider countryside: Kidney, liver and skeletal muscle samples. Type of management of carcasses important in terms of relative risk.

- Lab analysis — Need to include funding for analysis in projects. Gap in the Balkans, lack of labs for many of the analysis – developing this priority. Private labs, reference labs, research labs etc.

- Assessment of farming practices, usage of vet drugs, supplementary feeding sites operations - very useful to inform potential analysis (questionnaires, etc).

- Need to keep vulture corpses/samples/organs for future sampling + more analysis. Properly stored - Need freezers.
Vultures & vet drugs – in the Balkans

• Lots of progress in the last few years
• Samples collected in (mostly) live (blood) and dead birds, Egyptian, griffon & cinereous vultures
• Analysis done – mostly in Spain. For PCBs, DDE, heavy metals, antibiotics, NSAIDS, West Nile, Chlamydia. Mostly negative so far, except for lead (Euthanasian agents mostly ignored so far)
• State reference labs mostly focussed on residues for human consumption on vegetables, meat and milk. Limited capacity-accreditation-engagement for analysis of wildlife samples
• Need to develop screening capacity in the Balkans, engage with state labs, explore private and research labs
• Improve and develop risk assessment of existing and new drugs, toxicity tests, more analysis
• Need to feed wildlife data into the pharmacovigilance databases
• Check for oral lesions in vultures handled. At the most basic, presence/absence and photo, if possible swabs in appropriate medium
• Be vigilant about use of human diclofenac by some farmers (cases in Bulgaria and Greece)
• Promote collaboration with captive-breeding/wildlife rehabilitation facilities – send unfertilized eggs-samples for analysis (easier logistics, ...), monitor
• Vetagro (France) – offering free research on anticoagulants
• Univ. Barcelona – offering collaboration on histological analysis
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