

Are we looking at The Last African Vulture?

What can the US do
to help?



What
do you
think of
vultures?





They have a pretty bad reputation,
but are in fact
**the ultimate unsung
heroes.**

Can you imagine the African
skies devoid of soaring
vultures?



African vultures are **in**
crisis.



7 out of 11 of Africa's vulture species are now **Endangered** or **Critically Endangered**.

Because of the unique role vultures play, this is potentially a huge **crisis for people** too.



Africa holds 11 species of vulture
8 of which are found nowhere else in the world





CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

RÜPPELL'S VULTURE

Gyps rueppellii

✓ 97%



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

WHITE-HEADED VULTURE

Trigonoceps occipitalis

✓ 96%



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

WHITE-BACKED VULTURE

Gyps africanus

✓ 90%



CRITICALLY ENDANGERED

HOODED VULTURE

Necrosyrtes monachus

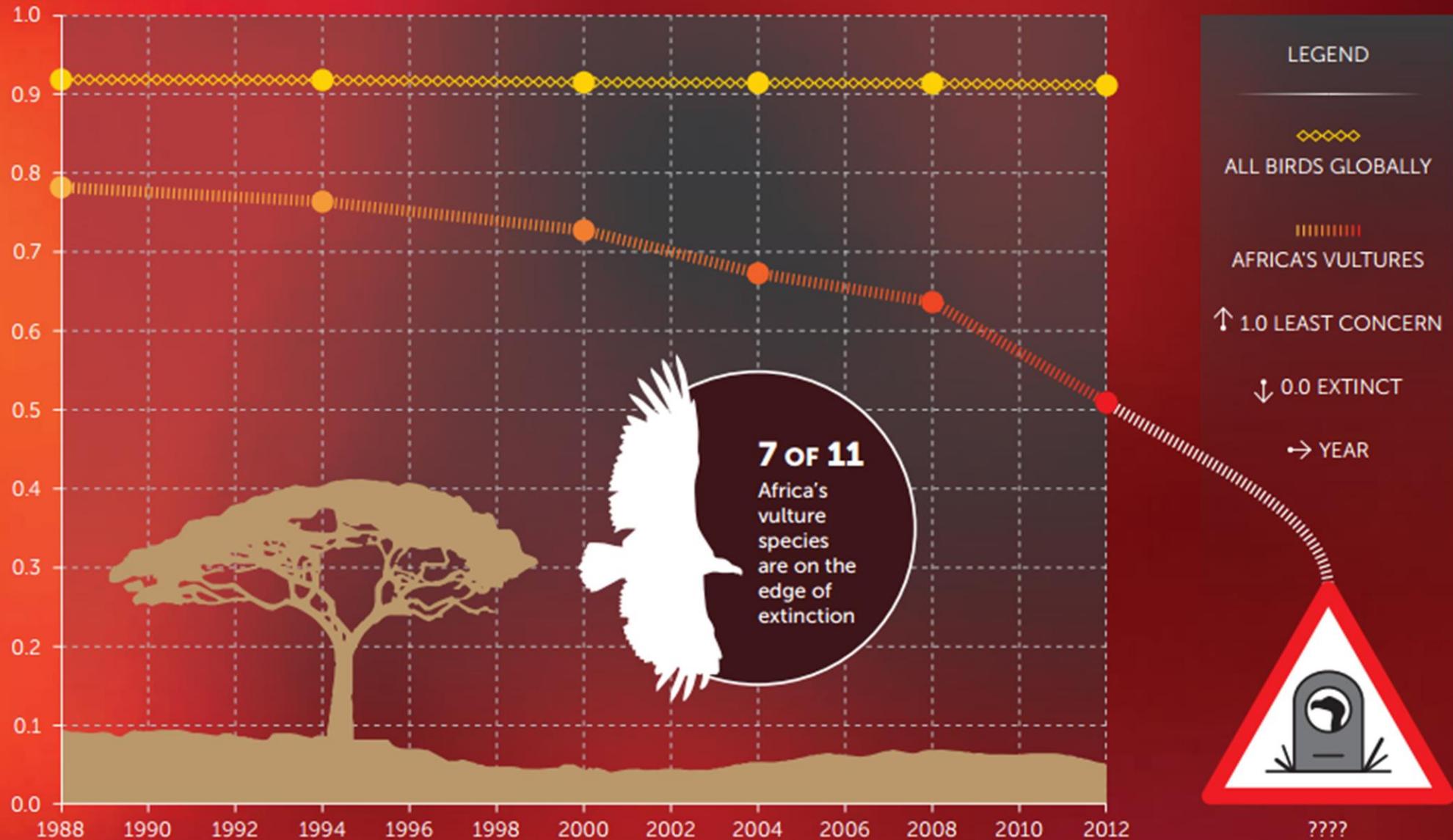
✓ 83%

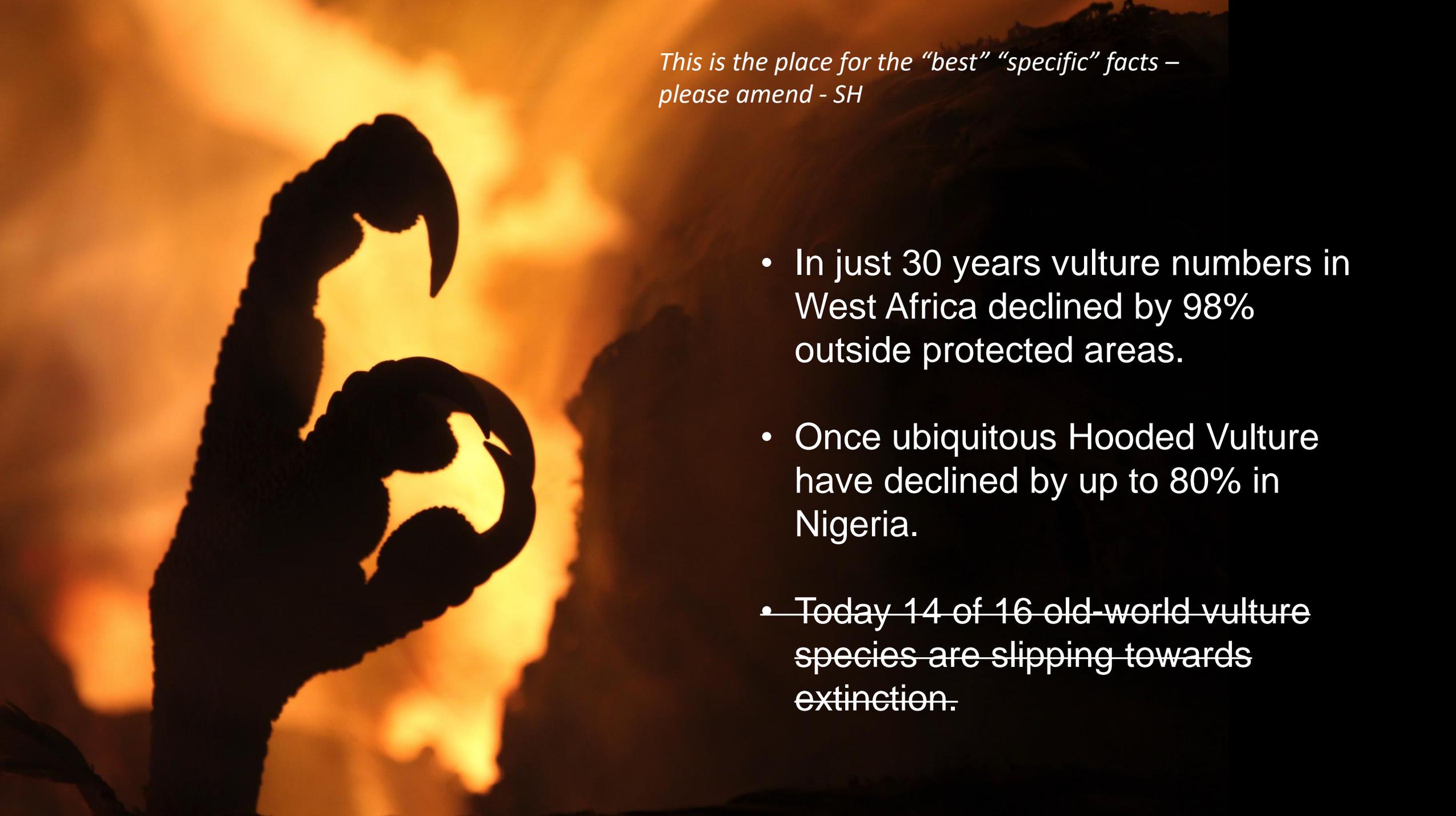
The Critical Four

- A massive on-going decline
- At least an 80% decline in range and numbers in last 10 years
- Expected to decline by a further 80% in the next ten years or three generations
- The science on this is very strong

Statuses by BirdLife International for the IUCN Red List
Decline percentages from Ogada et al 2015, based on figures from last 30 years

All of Africa's vultures? *Catastrophic decline (Red List Index)*



The background of the slide features a warm, golden sunset sky. In the foreground, the dark silhouettes of vulture heads are visible, with their long, hooked beaks pointing upwards and to the right. The lighting creates a strong contrast between the dark birds and the bright sky.

*This is the place for the “best” “specific” facts –
please amend - SH*

- In just 30 years vulture numbers in West Africa declined by 98% outside protected areas.
- Once ubiquitous Hooded Vulture have declined by up to 80% in Nigeria.
- ~~Today 14 of 16 old-world vulture species are slipping towards extinction.~~

Vulture species in Africa face

**extinction in our
lifetimes**

unless we act now.

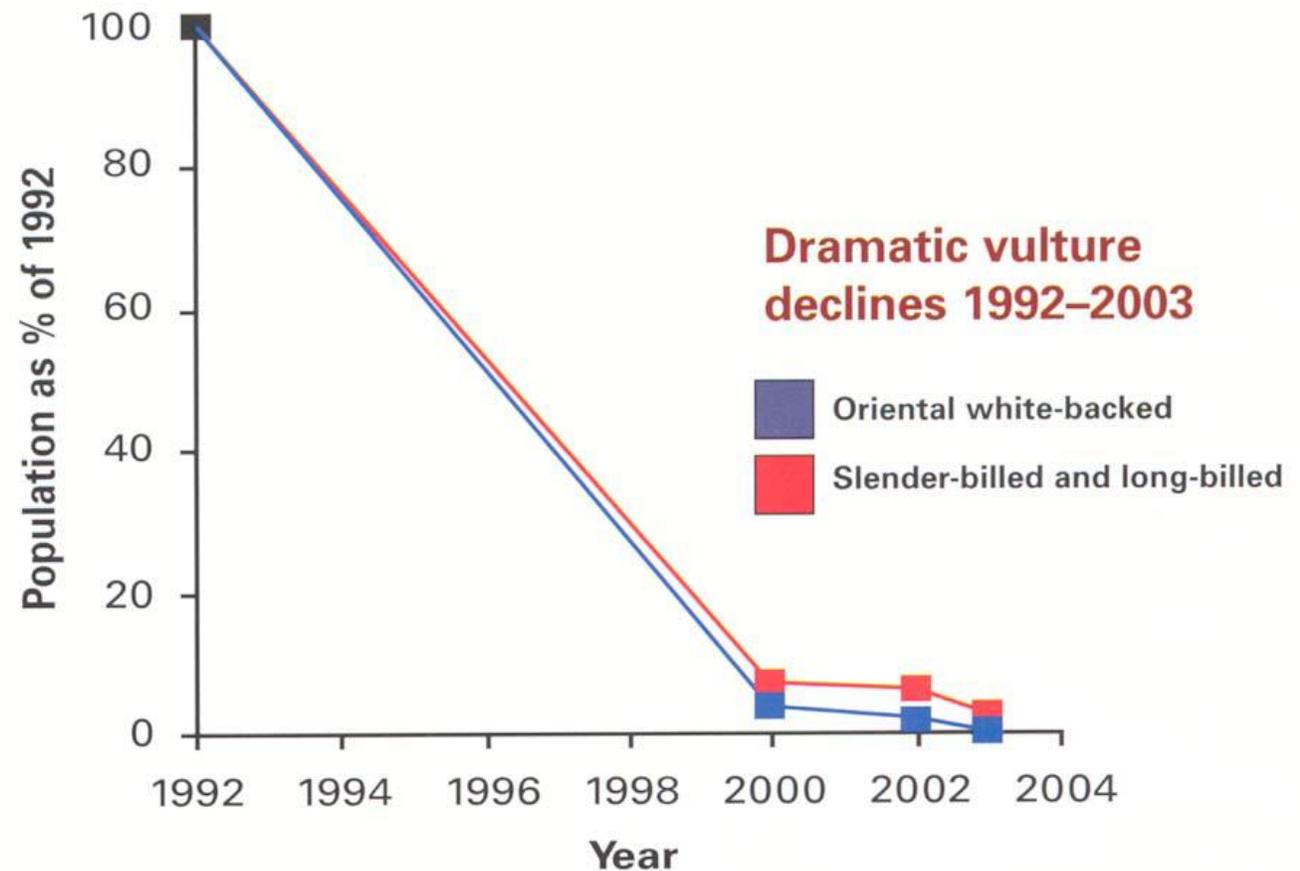
Period.



Why the catastrophic decline?

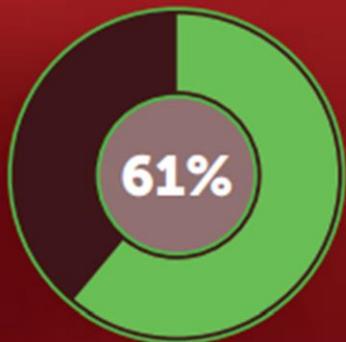


More threats and more complex than just Asia's diclofenac...



WHAT THREATENS AFRICA'S VULTURES?

Percentages are only representative reasons for recorded deaths.
Other important threats, as yet hard to quantify, such as habitat reduction, disturbance at nesting sites and reduced food availability are not illustrated.



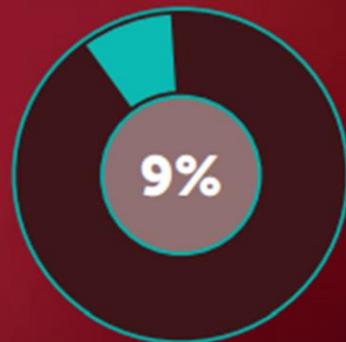
POISONING

- › Poisoning as a result of human-wildlife conflict where vultures are incidental victims.
- › Intentional poisoning by ivory poachers not wanting to be found by rangers.



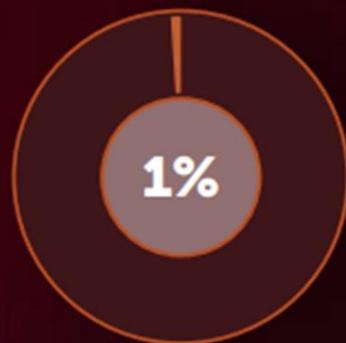
PERSECUTION

- › For body parts used in traditional medicine.
- › Also involves the use of poison.



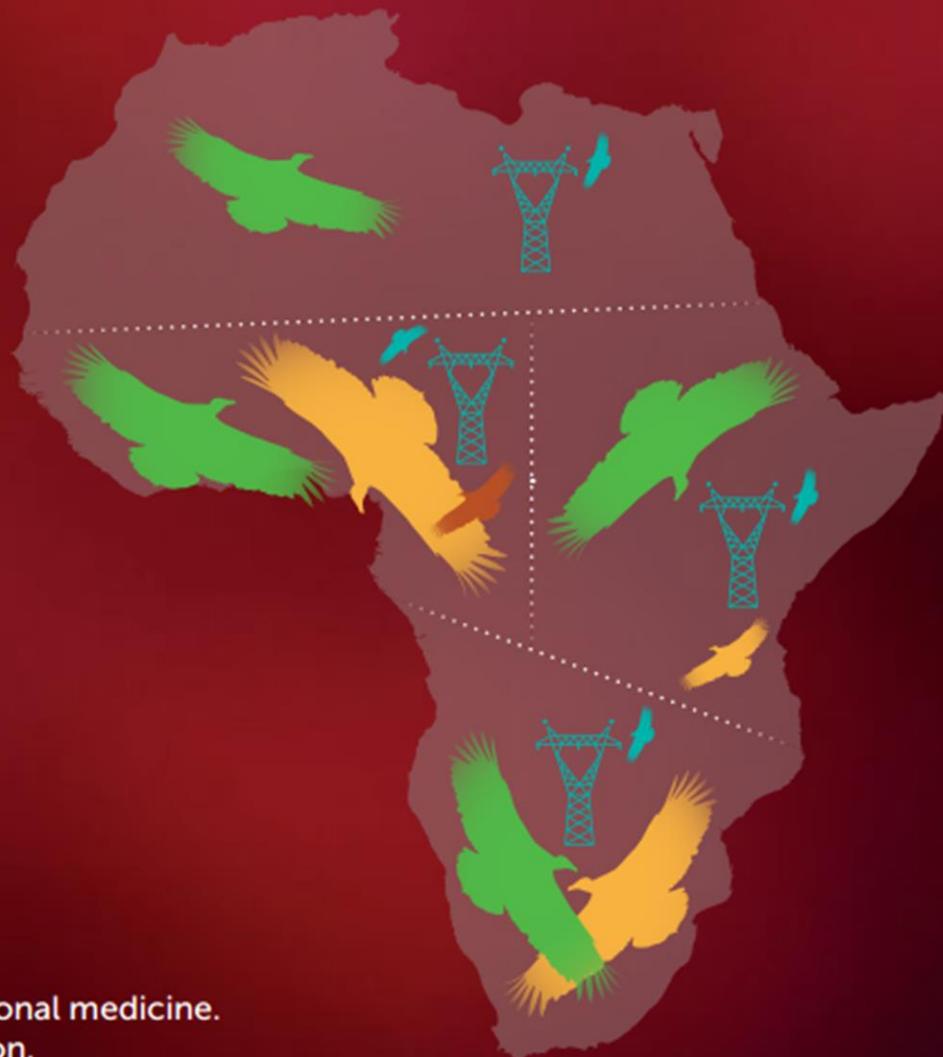
ELECTROCUTION & COLLISION

- › With poorly-planned powerlines, windfarms and roads.
- › Increasing threat with investment in development.



OTHER RECORDED KILLING

- › People are potentially eating poisoned vultures.



Unintentional poisoning

- Human-wildlife conflict
- Problem-animal control
- Lead poisoning



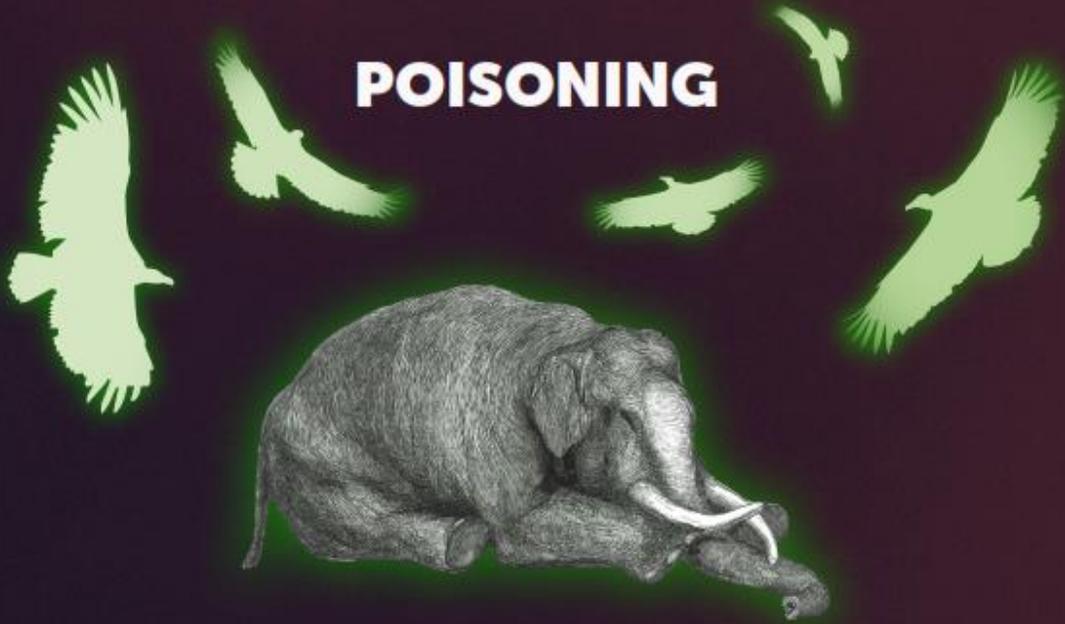
Intentional poisoning

- “Sentinels of the skies”



- Belief-based use

POISONING



1 Poisoned elephant carcass =
up to **500** dead vultures per incident



Windfarms & Powerlines





Do you find yourself
doing loads of work
to help people
without ever getting
any credit?

Sounds like a vulture.

Vultures are
misunderstood.

Our health depends on our vultures



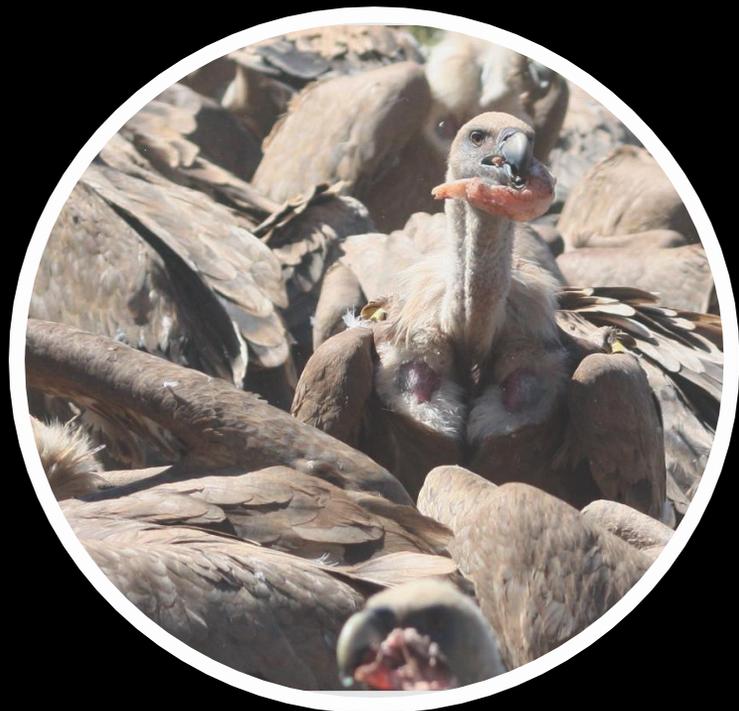
WITH VULTURES > ONE HOUR

They clean carcasses bare
before disease spores can form



WITHOUT VULTURES > A FEW DAYS

They reduce the spread of diseases like Anthrax,
Rabies, Tuberculosis, Botulism, Brucellosis



Vultures clean our landscapes for free

In Spain alone, avian scavengers are capable of removing **9.9 thousand tons** of carcasses per year

Vulture declines in India cost the government \$34 billion in health costs due to increases in diseases

VULTURES ARE WORTH MILLIONS



A single vulture is worth over US **\$ 11,000** dollars just for its cleaning services.
By halting the spread of disease, they are worth much, much more to governments in saved health service costs, not to mention tourism, etc.

How will Africa look (and smell) if we do not save vultures?

2009 status:
Least Concern



Common as
muck?



Hooded Vulture are known as 'garbage collectors' of carcasses and human waste. In 2009, they were **very abundant** in African cities.

#lovevultures



Show your support for nature's clean-up crew:

www.birdlife.org/savevultures

Who will clean up disease-ridden carcasses if we do not save vultures?

2004 status:
Least Concern



Gather in large
groups



100s of White-backed Vulture can be **poisoned** on a single carcass.

#lovevultures



Show your support for nature's clean-up crew:

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SURE, PANDAS ARE CUTE, BUT DO THEY TAKE OUT THE TRASH?



By consuming diseased carcasses, vultures help maintain nature's pristine beauty and reduce the spread of rabies, bubonic plague, tuberculosis, brucellosis and botulism.

What can you do?



AFRICAN VULTURES

NEED YOUR HELP

US Action Plan



1. Combat poisoning through rapid response systems
2. USAID support in tackling belief-based use
3. Scale-up safe areas for vultures in Africa “Vulture Safe Zones”
4. Minimise collision & electrocution risk with energy infrastructure
5. Highlight links with elephant poaching
6. Prevent the lurking threat of diclofenac

Rapid response to poisoning

BirdLife is working in Kenya, Zimbabwe and Botswana to stop vulture poisoning by establishing systems to help local authorities rapidly and effectively respond to a poisoning incident.

Nature Kenya, The Peregrine Fund, Endangered Wildlife Trust and others collaborated to bring the first ever poison response training to Kenya



- Held in November 2016, bringing together 37 participants representing 30 local conservation partners at Masai Mara Reserve.
- The important training focused on:
 - Correctly Identifying a poisoning crime scene, the signs and symptoms of wildlife poisoning,
 - Effective reporting,
 - Incident scene treatment,
 - Sample collection which is valid in courts, and
 - Containing the scene to prevent further poisoning.



Recommendations to combat poisoning

Carbofuran and other highly toxic chemicals



Raising **awareness:**

help raise the profile of vultures at the highest political levels

Support **adoption and implementation:**

of the Multi-Species Action Plan for African-Eurasian Vultures as mandated by the CMS resolution 11.14.

Implement:

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) poisoning guidelines, specifically:

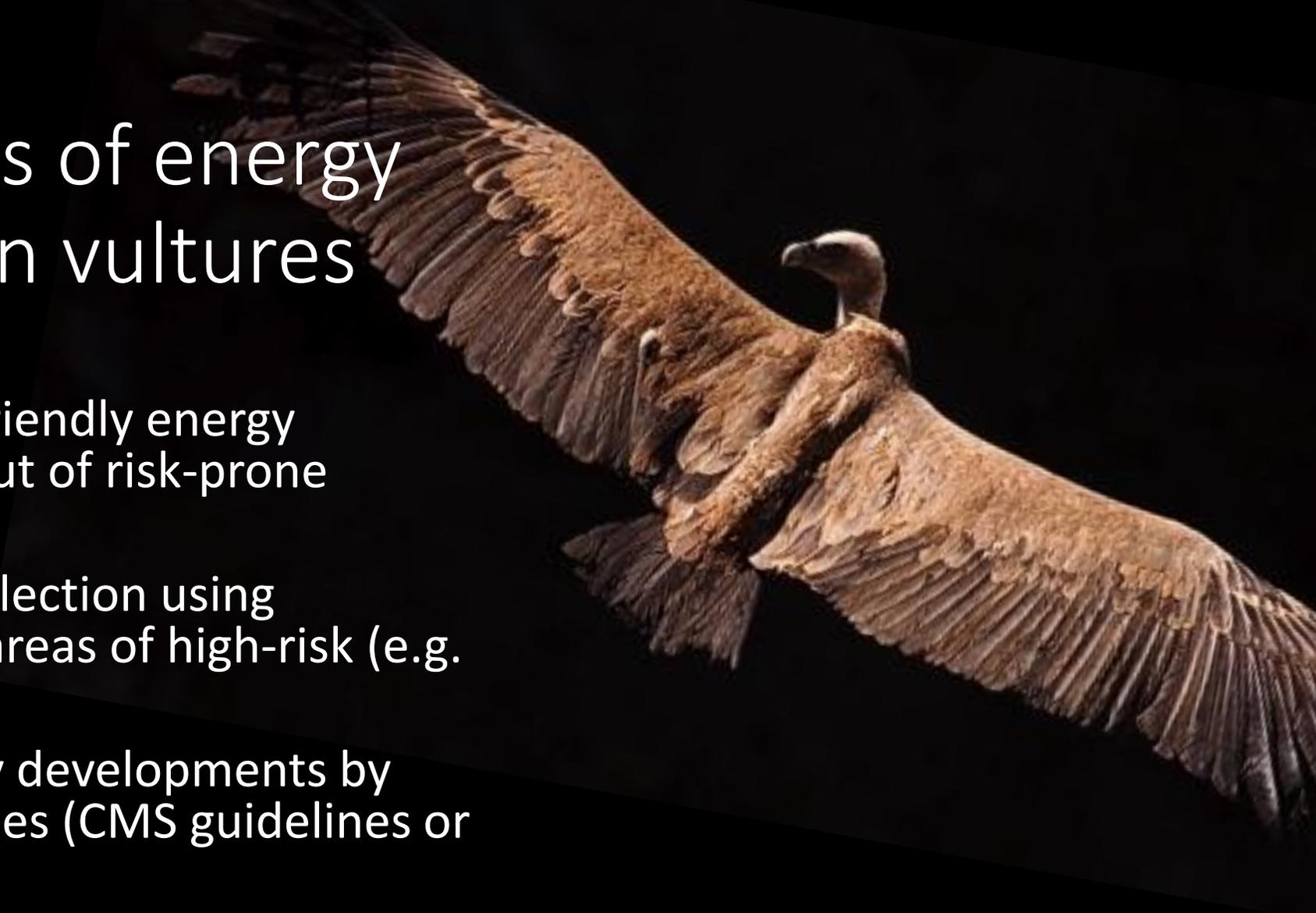
a. developing and enforcing appropriate legislation to control, ban or restrict the sale, storage, distribution, use and disposal of toxic chemicals used in the indiscriminate killing of wildlife

b. introducing and enforcing penalties on those found guilty of wildlife poisoning events that reflect the serious nature of the crime and act as sufficient deterrent to prevent the perpetration of such acts in future



Mitigate impacts of energy infrastructure on vultures

- Promote the use of bird-friendly energy technology and phasing out of risk-prone designs
- Ensure appropriate site selection using sensitivity maps to avoid areas of high-risk (e.g. vulture colonies)
- Ensure responsible energy developments by using appropriate guidelines (CMS guidelines or IFC Standards)
- Enable long-term monitoring & on-site mitigation measures



Vulture Safe Zones – Pilot in Zambia



And on that farm,
there are... vultures

Let's build on the increasing awareness



We've done it before: Asian Vultures



News Home » City » Kozhikode

Ban on diclofenac, a lifeline for vultures

3 Apr 2017



TNN | Sep 2, 2015, 08:18

One quarter of Bangladesh is safe from recently exposed vulture-killing drug

After successfully banning two drugs poisonous to vultures, Bangladesh is leading the way in Asian vulture conservation, and moving towards banning a third



Red-headed Vulture (Critically Endangered) © Jonathan Eames

DAILY NEWS 22 October 2014

Ban of vulture-killing drug in India is working

By Shreya Dasgupta



Hanging in there in India (Image: Bernard Castellein/naturepl.com)

Indian government takes major step to save vultures

Almost a decade after banning the veterinary drug diclofenac, the Indian government has banned large vials of the drug meant for human use



We've finally managed to stabilize population of Asia's Vultures

Thank you

