

# MEMO

Job **Parc Eolien Taiba NDiaye**  
Memo no. **M02346478\_2**  
Date **22/09/2015**  
To **Jean Kim,  
Sarah Shoff,**  
From **Adam Fitchet,**  
Copy to **Peter Burston,  
Sharon Maharg,  
Eric McCartney,  
Bruno Vignerou  
Chanda Kapande  
Lisa Pinsley**

## **Ramboll Environ call with OPIC, 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015 re. Hooded Vulture.**

Date 22/09/2015

This memo sets out the key points of the telephone conversation between Ramboll Environ and OPIC on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2015 regarding the sightings of hooded vulture *Necrosyrtes monachus* within the proposed Taiba N'Diaye wind farm Project Area in western Senegal.

Ramboll Environ  
5th Floor  
7 Castle Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3AH  
United Kingdom

T +44 131 297 2650  
www.ramboll-environ.com

Ref 02346478

- Vantage Point (VP) surveys to best practice international standards (Scottish Natural Heritage wind farm guidance, April 2014 as referenced in the biodiversity assessment) commenced in March 2015 in order to coincide with the spring migration period. Five VPs have been surveyed three times a month since March 2015 and these surveys are ongoing. The Biodiversity chapter of the ESIS Addendum reports the results of surveys up to and including August 2015.
- In the period from March 2015 to August 2015, 30 hours of observation have been completed from each VP. During these surveys just two observations of hooded vulture were made, one in April 2015 and one in August 2015, both in the northern part of the Project Area. An additional observation of a hooded vulture was made during the breeding bird survey within the Project Area. No observations of hooded vulture were made in any of the surveys completed within the Project Area in previous years before the VP surveys commenced in March 2015. Therefore, over the course of over 150 hours of observation within the Project Area, Hooded vultures have only been seen three times, which is a very low level of activity.

Ramboll Environ UK Limited  
Registered in England  
Company No: 2331163  
Registered Office:  
Artillery House  
11-19 Artillery Row  
London  
SW1P 1RT

- Hooded vultures nest in large trees, such as baobabs. They build large, conspicuous nests. No nests were found within the Project Area and none are known to exist in the surrounding area. Given their conspicuous nature, we would expect to have been told of their presence by local people if they were there. Also, if a nest was present, a considerably higher level of flight activity would likely to have been recorded during the surveys than the three sporadic observations.
- Of the two recorded VP flights of hooded vulture, one was seen far below potential collision height (PCH) and the other at the boundary height between below PCH and PCH (no height estimation was made for the bird recorded during the breeding bird surveys). Even taking the worst case scenario, this could represent two individual flights at potential risk of collision. The process involved in calculating collision risk for a flying bird, includes calculating the potential that the bird flies at PCH but isn't struck by a turbine blade and also requires the application of an avoidance rate to represent the action that birds will take to avoid the turbines. . Based on the data collected to date, the calculated collision risk would be incredibly small and lead to the conclusion of a negligible impact that would not result in an ecologically significant effect.
- As indicated in the Biodiversity chapter of the ESIS addendum, hooded vulture is likely to be imminently re-classified by BirdLife International and the IUCN from Endangered to Critically Endangered. This reclassification is because of large recent population declines across its African range. The critical habitat assessment has taken a precautionary approach and is based on hooded vulture being a Critically Endangered species. It is unlikely that the Project Area would qualify as critical habitat if the threatened status of hooded vulture remains as Endangered, as the unit of analysis (the Discrete Management Unit, or DMU in IFC terminology) is unlikely to support more than 1 % of the global population or 10% of the National Senegalese population of the species). For the purposes of the assessment the DMU for hooded vulture is defined by the region of Thies, in which the Project is situated. The region of Thies covers an area of 6,670 km<sup>2</sup>. With such a low threshold for critical habitat for critically endangered species, in order for the DMU to be considered to be critical habitat for the species, it only needs to support one regularly occurring individual of the species. So, even with just three observations over six months, the DMU can be considered to support a regularly occurring individual and is therefore critical habitat.
- There are, however, a number of important qualifications to consider alongside the critical habitat assessment. The categorisation of critical habitat applies to the wider area within which the Project Area lies (i.e. the DMU), not to the Project Area specifically. The Project Area is dominated by low fruit trees, and supports few larger trees. Therefore, it does not provide optimal habitat for hooded vulture to nest. Also, whilst there are some small groups of livestock in the Project Area, there aren't large gatherings of livestock. This is an important observation as vultures are scavengers and carrion eaters and food resource is a good predictor of their presence. It is possible that the small rubbish dumps on the edge of each of the small villages are attracting the birds. Elsewhere in this part of Senegal, Hooded vultures presence is strongly tied to the larger habitations and the associated rubbish, with many Hooded vultures seen above Dakar and as well as above Thies.

- Vultures are large birds that can travel great distances. As such, we believe that the birds that have been seen over the Project Area are passing through the area as part of a larger home range, rather than focussed activity within the Project Area. If there was a specific reason for the birds to visit the Project Area, we would expect them to have been recorded far more frequently. Also, as there are no particular features for the vultures to occur in the Project Area. No direct adverse impacts on any such features (e.g. from habitat loss) are predicted as a result of the proposed wind farm.
- Although no significant adverse impacts are predicted on hooded vulture populations, to meet the requirements of IFC PS6, the project needs to deliver a net gain for the species as a feature conferring critical habitat status. The mitigation measures set out in the Biodiversity chapter of the ESIS Addendum are designed to deliver such a net gain. These will be delivered through a Project Biodiversity Action Plan (see BAP framework included in Annex E to the Biodiversity chapter of the ESIS Addendum), underpinned by research. An understanding of vulture abundance and breeding locations would provide an excellent baseline upon which to build. An understanding of the threats faced by the species would allow an appropriate conservation programme to be developed to aid the species.
- In order to ensure that the one possible attraction for the species within the Project Area is removed, as part of the mitigation measures, the Project will work with local villages to develop better rubbish disposal processes.
- Finally, targeted monitoring of the species will continue for at least 15 years. This will allow the mitigation measures to be adapted if necessary.