



BirdLife's 5 'asks' for Copenhagen

Climate change is happening. Over the last hundred years, the Earth's surface temperature has risen by an average of 0.74°C, and, in places, well above 2°C. The rise is almost certainly linked to human-produced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, which rose by 70% between 1970 and 2004 alone.

Climate change impacts including droughts, crop failure, flooding, sea-level rise and extreme weather events are already being felt across the world, with the poorest people and vulnerable ecosystems hit hardest.

There is an increasing weight of scientific evidence that observed changes in climate have already adversely affected biodiversity at the species and ecosystem level, and current levels of climate change are modest compared to most projections. Plant and animal ranges are shifting poleward and upward, and studies suggest many species will not be able to keep up with their changing climate space.

One global study estimates that 15–37% of species could be committed to extinction by 2050 as a consequence of climate change; another that each degree of warming could drive another 100-500 bird species extinct. Temperature rises beyond 2°C are predicted to lead to catastrophic extinction rates, with few practical conservation options left.

There is a window between now and 2015 within which it may be possible to significantly slow down or lower the expected increases in global temperatures, through reductions in global GHG emissions.

A new agreement on tackling climate change is scheduled to be finalised by the Conference of Parties (COP) in Copenhagen in December 2009. However, current indications suggest a political agreement with a timetable setting out the path to a full international treaty is the most likely outcome.

Against a background of political equivocation and watering down of commitments, BirdLife continues to advocate for a legally binding

enforceable agreement. BirdLife Partners from around the world will be in Copenhagen, working on different aspects of the climate change agenda.

The BirdLife Partnership believes any global deal agreed in Copenhagen must:

1. Cut global emissions by the amount needed to limit global average temperature rises to less than 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Developed countries should take the lead in cutting emissions, but rapidly industrialising developing nations must act too. Global emissions must peak and decline well before 2020, and go to 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. Industrialised countries must take on targets of 40% reductions below 1990 levels by 2020.

2. Recognise the vital importance of safeguarding biodiversity, ecosystems and the essential services they provide in climate change mitigation, in particular, reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD).

Tropical deforestation accounts for 15-20% of all human-induced emissions, and must be reduced to zero by 2020. REDD should prioritise conservation of natural tropical forests because they are the most carbon dense, and must exclude conversion of natural forests to industrial forests or plantations. REDD must include provisions which ensure conservation of biodiversity because it is the plants and animals in natural forests that help create their carbon density. REDD must respect, support and promote the rights of local and indigenous peoples.

3. Recognise the vital importance of safeguarding biodiversity, ecosystems and the essential services they provide in climate change adaptation. Healthy bio-diverse environments play a vital role in maintaining and increasing resilience to climate change. Copenhagen outcomes should encompass taking an ecosystem approach to *all* adaptation, should refer to the direct use of ecosystems as part of a strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change, and should recognise vulnerable ecosystems as a priority.

4. Provide funding for developing countries to reduce emissions from deforestation, enable adaptation to climate change, and support low-carbon development. At least \$200 billion will be needed annually by 2020, including \$35 billion for REDD, and \$100 billion to enable developing countries to adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change.

5. Ensure that when developed countries account for their land-use sectors they account fully for carbon emissions to, and removals from, the atmosphere. Current rules enable countries to hide emissions whilst claiming credit for carbon storage, and the proposed rules are shaping up to be even worse than the old ones.

BirdLife Partners from the following 16 countries will be in Copenhagen:

Africa: NATURAMA (Burkina Faso), EWNHS (Ethiopia), NCE (Egypt), Nigerian Conservation Foundation (Nigeria), CSSL (Sierra Leone), BirdLife South Africa (South Africa), BirdLife Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe)

Americas: Grupo Jaragua (Dominican Republic), Pronatura (Mexico), Guyra Paraguay (Paraguay)

Asia: Burung Indonesia (Indonesia), Haribon Foundation (Philippines)

Europe: BirdLife Belarus - APB (Belarus), DOF (Denmark), NABU (Germany), SEO (Spain), SOF (Sweden), RSPB (UK)

Pacific: O le Si'osi'omaga Society Incorporated (Samoa)