

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL AFRICA PARTNERSHIP
(West Africa Sub-regional Office)



Region or Country: Senegal, Gambia, Mauritania, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Cape Verde

Project Title: Strengthening networks for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats along the west coast of Africa

Date of Project Approval: 1 October 2010 **Date the Project Ends:** 31 March 2014

Focal Area: PRCM Region, West Africa

Amount of Financing: Euros 1.4 Millions

Co-finance: Euros 509,759 (From BirdLife, Wetlands International, VBN, LPO, etc.)

Project Status: Initial stage of the project. Launched on April 8, 2011 at the inception workshop in Dakar, Senegal

Donors: MAVA Foundation/VBN/Wetlands International

Other Partners: BirdLife International network, FIBA, Wetlands International, PRCM, AEWA, LPO, Ramsar

National partners: Association Nature-Communautés-Développement, Biosfera I, Conservation Society of Sierra Leone, Guinée Ecologie, Nature Mauritanie, Organização para a Defesa o Desenvolvimento(ODZH) and West Africa Bird Study Association.

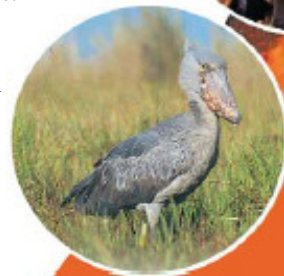
Project Description:

Overall Goal:

Strong, sustainable and efficient NGO-government networks are formed for the conservation of biodiversity in the PRCM region, especially for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats along the West African coast through a comprehensive programme of targeted action at the flyway, regional, national and site level.

Objectives:

1. Increase understanding of the conservation status and needs of migratory birds and their habitats in West Africa.
2. Establish cost-effective and sustainable monitoring systems that will track changes in the status of migratory birds and their habitats.
3. Develop and strengthen technical capacity for flyway conservation in the region, and support the development of strong networks and NGO-government partnerships for engaging in the long-term conservation of migratory birds. Strengthened NGOs and partnerships will be well placed to attract new sources of funding to make conservation efforts along the West African coast financially sustainable.
4. Through participatory conservation and management of key sites and species:
 - a. Take action to prevent the extinction of migratory bird species; reverse the declines in commoner species and mitigate threats to their habitats.
 - b. Address sustainable livelihood issues and increase participation of local communities in migratory bird conservation to ensure long-term conservation benefits.
 - c. Improve the conservation status of migratory birds in the coastal zone of West Africa, with specific plans initiated for selected threatened species and for promoting ecotourism based on migratory birds.



5. Identify and use opportunities for policy and advocacy work to improve the conservation status of migratory birds and sites along the coast of West Africa.

The project will have seven key components, all of which were identified during a partnership project development workshop (BirdLife International 2009), summarised as: improved knowledge; sustainable monitoring; effective planning; capacity development; strong networks; participatory conservation and management; and policy & advocacy.

Rationale:

This project is an NGO-government partnership project for migratory bird conservation along the coast of West Africa. BirdLife will work foremost through and with identified national NGO partners, which will benefit from strategic and technical capacity development for their institutional strengthening. This is a key sustainability strategy to ensure that organisations across the region are able and motivated to address the conservation of migratory birds at a local, national and regional level. However, the project will also ensure that strong relationships are forged with national governments, both directly and through the advocacy and other actions of national NGOs. This will help in building strong and sustainable government-NGO partnerships, which can have great benefits at the site level, especially in and around protected areas, at the national level, especially through capacity building and advocacy, and at the regional level.

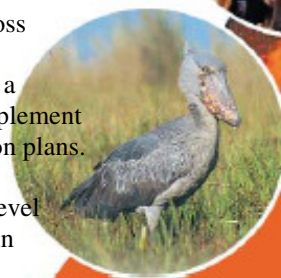
The project will benefit from the input of BirdLife's network of international NGO Partners, especially from Europe, as these organisations have a vested interest in the conservation of many of the same migratory birds. The project will also forge partnerships at the regional level, notably with Wetlands International, which has strong relationships with national governments and NGOs, and proven capacity in the region in many important areas, such as training, monitoring and site management. FIBA, another key partner, also has long experience in training, monitoring and MPA management.

BirdLife and its partners also have developed successful mechanisms to work with local communities at the site level, and this approach will be rolled out in the PRCM region during the project. Finally, the project will work with governmental agencies and Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), notably the African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), which specifically focuses on migratory waterbirds and the Ramsar Convention that promotes conservation and sustainable use of wetland habitats and their biodiversity.

Main Activities:

A summary of the activities for each main project output is provided below:

1. Review the status of migratory birds, IBAs and key habitats along the West African coast, rank the threats to sites and habitats, determine the requirements of long-distance migrants and synthesise the role of local communities in conservation.
2. Develop and initiate implementation of a regional monitoring plan for migratory birds, agree monitoring protocols and review target monitoring sites, establish procedures for coordinated monitoring, undertake monitoring of migratory birds and selected sites, and produce a regional status and trends report.
3. Establish and implement a training programme focused on migratory bird conservation, and develop a young graduate support programme. Strengthen capacity of environmental NGOs in the coastal zone of West Africa and promote collaboration between them through a regional network.
4. Initiate and support a range of participatory conservation projects across the region embracing conservation and livelihood support, also strengthening local community groups at project sites and developing a resource pack focused natural resource management. Develop and implement specific actions for threatened migratory species through species action plans.
5. Build migratory bird conservation into relevant regional and flyway-level agreements and promote advocacy and awareness of migratory birds in the coastal zone of West Africa.



BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL AFRICA PARTNERSHIP

Outputs:

1. Improved knowledge of the conservation status, critical sites, habitat requirements, threats to and actions required for migratory birds and their habitats in West Africa.
2. Operational cost-effective and sustainable monitoring systems, especially to track changes in the status and conservation of migratory birds and their habitats.
3. Strong capacity in the coastal zone of West Africa for migratory bird research, conservation and management; strong network of environmental NGOs in the PRCM region with capacity to contribute actively to migratory bird conservation.
4. Participatory conservation of key sites and species leading to improved livelihoods and enhanced conditions for migratory birds.
5. Lasting NGOs-government-MEA partnerships contributing to improved conservation status of migratory birds and their habitats in West Africa through regional policy and advocacy actions.

In addition, a Project Steering Committee and other structures with good stakeholder representation will guide an efficient regional office and ensure the following project management output:

- Effective management and coordination systems established to facilitate achievement of the project objectives.

Outcomes:

The long-term outcomes for the project linked to the above outputs are:

1. The requirements for the conservation of migratory birds and their habitats in West Africa are well known and translated into action.
2. The conservation of migratory birds and their habitats is closely monitored through established sustainable systems.
3. A strong network of environmental NGOs with professional conservationists and successful NGO-government partnerships in the PRCM region contributing actively to migratory bird research and conservation.
4. Improved livelihoods and enhanced conditions for migratory birds at key sites resulting from participatory conservation initiatives.
5. Improved conservation status of migratory birds and their habitats in West Africa resulting from enhanced regional policy, advocacy and awareness.

Progress:

- Appointment of a project manager
- Project management structure in place
- Project office set up in Freetown, Sierra Leone
- Inception workshop organised

Challenges:

- Project has accused a delay of about 8 months.

Next Steps:

- Launch activities in each of the seven countries

Contact:

BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat,
West Africa Sub-regional office
c/o Ghana Wildlife Society
P.O. Box 13252, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233-302-665197
Mobile: +233-244-606-878
Email: Paulinus.ngeh@birdlife.org, accra-office@birdlife.org
Website: www.birdlife.org

