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## Editorial: Much more than birds



Dear Reader,

Coming from Natuurpunt (BirdLife in Belgium), where I work as Policy Officer on Marine and Legal issues, I was at the same time thrilled and curious when I was offered to work for few months in the BirdLife European Division in Brussels. Every day, sharing meetings and lunches with my new colleagues, I could discover on how many issues BirdLife actually works, going much further than just saving birds.

But most of all I could feel I belong to the great BirdLife Partnership, together with millions of motivated and passionate people who every day give the best of themselves to protect nature and a healthier environment, connecting the real work

on the ground with our advocacy work at national and international level.

As you can see from the articles in this issue of the newsletter, we talk about biodiversity targets, public goods, biofuels ... but in the end it is all about protecting our beautiful planet and make sure we can enjoy its wonders now and in the future.

After those six months in BirdLife a bird will never look the same. When I see a bird flying in the sky, I feel really proud of the work we do.

With best wishes,



Nathalie De Snijder  
Marine Advocacy Officer  
BirdLife International European Division

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## Bioenergy: a carbon accounting time bomb



Two new independent scientific studies commissioned by BirdLife International, the European Environmental Bureau and Transport & Environment cast further doubt on the EU's policy of promoting biomass as fuel for heat and power generation, and biofuels for transport.

The first study, carried out by Joanneum Research, identifies a major flaw in the way carbon savings from forest-derived biomass are calculated in EU law as well as under UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol mechanisms. It concludes that harvesting trees for energy creates a 'carbon debt': the carbon contained in the trees is emitted upfront while trees grow back over many years. The true climate impact of so-called woody biomass in the short to medium term can, as a result, be worse

than the fossil fuels it is designed to replace.

"The EU is taking out a sub-prime carbon mortgage that it may never be able to pay back. Biomass policy needs to be fixed before this regulatory failure leads to an ecological crisis that no bail out will ever fix", commented Ariel Brunner, Head of EU Policy at BirdLife International.

The second study, by CE Delft, examines the full climate impact of the main biofuels used in Europe. In particular it looked at the impact of the expansion of agricultural land into environmentally sensitive areas when food production is displaced by fuel crops, a process known as indirect land use change (ILUC). The report, based on analysis of several EU Commission-sponsored research projects and other international model studies, found that most current biofuels are as bad as fossil fuels for the climate once ILUC is taken into consideration. The study proposes concrete ways of correcting current greenhouse gas balance calculations to fully account for indirect land use change related emissions.

"As long as the EU refuses to take the full climate impacts of biofuels into account, its climate strategy for transport is doomed to failure" said Nuša Urbancic, Policy Officer at Transport & Environment, the sustainable transport campaigners.

"If left unchanged, biomass for energy policy will soon be in the same dire and confused state as biofuel policy is today", added Pieter de Pous, Senior Policy Officer at the European Environmental Bureau. "This can be avoided if the Commission and industry are ready to face up to these facts and develop the necessary measures that will ensure bioenergy policy will actually make a positive contribution to fighting climate change".

Together, current EU policy on biomass and biofuels risks severe environmental impacts across the globe, and a carbon debt that could take centuries to pay off.

The three groups are calling on the EU to come forward with mandatory sustainability criteria for biomass and to incorporate indirect land use change calculations into the existing sustainability criteria for biofuels and bioenergy.

Download the report [here](#)

Download the Joanneum Research study [here](#)

Bergsma G. C., Croezen H. J., Otten M. B. J. & van Valkengoed M.P.J., Biofuels: indirect land use change and climate impact, Delft, CE Delft, June 2010.

Download the CE Delft study [here](#)

Zanchi G, Pena N., Bird N., The upfront carbon debt of bioenergy, Graz, Joanneum Research, June 2010.'

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## What do we need to achieve the new 2020 biodiversity target?



The EU has clearly failed to halt the loss of biological diversity within its own territory and beyond by 2010.

The principal reasons in the EU for this failure in 2010 are well known and can be identified in the incomplete implementation of the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, which are the backbone of EU nature conservation policy, the failure to integrate biodiversity concerns into other policies such as agriculture or fisheries, and a severe shortage of funding for biodiversity and the Natura 2000 network.

In March 2010 EU Heads of States adopted a new biodiversity target, which aims at "halting the loss of biodiversity and the degradation of ecosystem services in the EU by 2020, and restoring them in so far as feasible, while stepping up the EU contribution to averting global biodiversity loss".

If the EU wants to be serious this time and achieve its new biodiversity target, rapid and decisive action is needed. In this context BirdLife International and the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) have set out a series of specific actions in a response to the Commission stakeholders' consultation that would enable a new EU biodiversity policy framework to achieve its goals. These actions build on the successes of the existing policy framework such as the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, while also seeking to reinforce and address gaps in this framework .

Ariel Brunner, Head of EU policy at BirdLife International, commented "The European Commission is expected to publish its new EU Biodiversity Strategy at the end of 2010. The EU must respond in a comprehensive, rapid and decisive way to the deepening biodiversity crisis by launching an effective 'biodiversity rescue package'. It is more than symbolic that this all is happening in the International Year of Biodiversity".

The new joint BirdLife EEB document, 'Delivering the 2020 Target - Priority initiatives for the EU Biodiversity Conservation Policy beyond 2010' draws the outline of the main themes such a package should include.

Download the document [here](#)

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## Reality check: are CAP subsidies paying for environmental quality?



A new report launched by BirdLife International finds that current CAP spending intensity is not reflecting any nature conservation priorities nor supporting nature-friendly farms in three key European countries.

The new report presents studies carried out in Spain, Germany and the Czech Republic using CAP subsidy data and environmental performance indicators to answer the question: "Does the current CAP support farmers engaged in sustainable practices and delivering environmental public goods?"

The main results are:

- Subsidy intensity has never been found to reflect conservation values or level of public goods delivery;
- Where subsidies are based on historical reference (which is the situation in most 'old Member States') there is still a perverse link between subsidy intensity and poor environmental performance, such as depleted and polluted groundwater, lack of landscape elements, etc.;
- Flat rate payments (which is the system used in most 'new Member States') seem to remove the perverse subsidy effect but fail to properly reward farmers that deliver public goods (farmers engaged in best practices and worst practices receiving the same amount of subsidies);
- Still widespread problem of very high payments going to farms actively destroying biodiversity or to farms that are delivering virtually no public goods;
- Widespread failure to fund the Natura 2000 network despite repeated claims by the EU that the CAP is a major funding source for management of the EU's only system of protected areas.

The release of CAP beneficiaries' data is finally allowing a proper investigation of CAP quality of spending and this report is one of the first attempts to actually measure the environmental performance of the EU subsidy system. Unfortunately the quality of data released by Member States is often poor and not homogenous enough to allow for proper EU wide analysis. BirdLife International hopes that this study will be used by other organizations and government bodies as an example to perform more in depth and EU wide analysis.

Download the full report [here](#)

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## Spring Alive: more than 100 000 observations and a Blue Stork!



With the participation of 35 BirdLife Partners and 103.000 bird observations, the fifth season of the BirdLife Spring Alive Campaign successfully ended on 22 June. This is a major accomplishment, especially if compared to the 3.935 observations registered in 2006, when the Campaign was launched.

Spring Alive is a European and African campaign which promotes children's interest in nature conservation through the celebration of the arrival of spring, observing the migration of White Stork *Ciconia ciconia*, Barn Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, Common Swift *Apus apus* and Common Cuckoo *Cuculus canorus*.

With the astonishment of scientists, this year German children registered the arrival of an exceptional "Blue Stork", which immediately became a local attraction.

Apparently the Stork had hit some ink or paint during his travel, fortunately surviving the accident. Despite its original colour, or maybe thanks to its peculiar look, the Stork found a mate, and children congratulated the couple on the Campaign blog.

Next year the colourful European Bee-eater *Merops apiaster* will join the four migratory species observed during the campaign. "We are very proud to include this beautiful bird in the Campaign, as it will attract many new participants, especially from Southern Europe and Africa" commented enthusiastically Magdalena Chrzanowska, European Coordinator of the BirdLife Spring Alive Campaign.

For further information on the Spring Alive Campaign visit [www.springalive.net](http://www.springalive.net) or contact Magdalena Chrzanowska at [magdalena.chrzanowska@otop.org.pl](mailto:magdalenachrzanowska@otop.org.pl)

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## The Swiss biodiversity safari



The 'Biodiversity Days', organized by SVS/BirdLife Switzerland at the beginning of June were without any doubts the most important event within the International Year of Biodiversity, with more than 120 activities. Under the motto of 'discover, experience, explore', over 10.000 people joined the biggest biodiversity safari in Switzerland ever, discovering and learning more about 2000 different species. In the SVS visitor centre at La Sauge, in the French speaking part of the country, experts and nature lovers worked together for 24 hours to monitor the 900 species on the site, among which they spotted the *Molanna albicans*, from the family of caddisflies, seen for the third time ever in Switzerland.

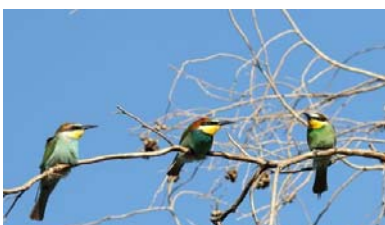
Other events took place in Rheinfelden (canton Aargau), in the city and canton of Zurich and all over the country, offering thrilling nature experience to the public. Several members of regional governments visited the Biodiversity Days, showing their commitment to biodiversity conservation. Because of the great success of this initiative, SVS/BirdLife Switzerland will continue organizing these Biodiversity Days in the coming years.

For more information please contact Barbora Neversil, Communication and Information Manager at SVS/BirdLife Switzerland at [barbora.neversil@birdlife.ch](mailto:barbora.neversil@birdlife.ch)

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## European Bee-eaters run gauntlet of "scaring" in Cyprus



BirdLife Cyprus is seeking a way to secure a "safe passage" for all European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster*, as they flood through Cyprus in their thousands every autumn. The problem is that beekeepers on the Eastern Mediterranean Island are given licenses to "scare" hungry Bee-eaters off their hives by firing shots in the air. Which is fine in theory, but in practice it means many Bee-eaters simply get shot.

"We are seeking the help of the BirdLife Partnership to come up with effective alternatives to this scaring approach; something that will work for the beekeepers

and the Bee-eaters," commented Martin Hellicar, BirdLife Cyprus Campaigns Manager. "If anyone knows a cost-effective and truly non-lethal method for keeping Bee-eaters away from hives that has worked elsewhere, then we want to hear from them!"

BirdLife Cyprus' pressure has been instrumental in getting the authorities to hold off on granting Bee-eater scaring licenses for this autumn...at least for the time being. Now we urgently need a viable solution, as the logical ecological arguments used until now, assuming that bees can survive a bit of predation, are not well received by local beekeepers, whose honey production has been hard-hit in recent years by pesticides, diseases, habitat loss and degradation. European Bee-eaters – a Species of European Conservation Concern (SPEC 3 species) that is still recovering from declines between 1970-1990 - also remain one of the favorite targets for bird trappers in Cyprus, a persistent problem BirdLife Cyprus has been battling for almost a decade.

For more information please contact Martin Hellicar, BirdLife Cyprus Campaigns Manager at [martin.hellicar@birdlifecyprus.org.cy](mailto:martin.hellicar@birdlifecyprus.org.cy)

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### BirdLife Partners awarded the prize for best EU LIFE Nature Projects



Three BirdLife Partners have been awarded the prize for the best LIFE Nature Project in 2008-2009. Among them, SPEA 'LIFE Priolo', a project that contributed to the recovery of Azores Bullfinch *Pyrrhula marina*, was selected for the 'Best of the Best Projects'.

"BirdLife Partners have demonstrated that when they match well deserved LIFE funds with their excellent knowledge, skills and commitment, remarkable results are bound to follow. This is a precious demonstration that biodiversity can be saved when sufficient resources are available at the right place and time", commented Boris Barov, BirdLife European Conservation Manager.

#### **Priolo Project, Portugal**

SPEA's Priolo project aimed to prevent the extinction of the world's only population of Azores Bullfinch. This bird can only be found on the island of São Miguel in the Azores archipelago. It has been threatened by invasive vegetation taking over its native habitat.

The winning project helped the preparation of a management plan for the Special Protection Area (SPA), and carried out restoration of its habitat. A key feature of the project's approach was the involvement of the regional administration and local people in the application of the project's conservation actions. The project also intended to support farmers in the use of EU funds and raise public awareness through a range of educational tools.

#### **EAGLELIFE Project, Estonia**

This project, led by EOS (BirdLife in Estonia) focused on three species listed on Annex I of the Birds Directive: Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, Lesser Spotted Eagle *Aquila pomarina*, and the Greater Spotted Eagle *Aquila clanga*, one of the most threatened eagles in Europe.

The conservation of mosaic landscapes, featuring old-growth forests with large, old trees for nesting and meadows and floodplains for foraging, are essential for these birds. Such habitats are not only rare, but recent changes in rural land-use practices threaten their further existence.

The main objective of the project was to preserve and restore these important habitats in five Natura 2000 sites, closely cooperating with landowners and increasing public awareness among local communities. One achievement of the EAGLELIFE project was the establishment of a micro-reserve around each known nest of the target species, if it was outside an existing nature conservation area.

Other successes of the project included gaining new information on the behaviour of these migratory birds using GPS/satellite tracking. Webcams at some nests attracted over 8.3 million visits online and allowed the production of high-quality materials such as a DVD and a booklet.

#### **Identification of marine IBAs, Spain and Portugal**

The designation of Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in the marine environment is the next big step on the agenda of many BirdLife Partners and also the EU. While the breeding colonies of marine birds are generally well protected, the definition of marine SPAs at sea is still a gap in the Natura 2000 network.

The projects, led by SEO/BirdLife (BirdLife in Spain) and SPEA (BirdLife in Portugal) delivered a detailed inventory of marine IBAs for seabirds using objective methodological criteria. The methodology used has now been adopted by other members of BirdLife International as part of a global standard for such surveys.

The results are impressive: 42 marine IBAs in Spain have been identified encompassing 42,883 km<sup>2</sup>, or about 5% of

the Spanish marine waters. These IBAs provide habitats for 27 different seabirds, including 16 species from Annex I of the Birds Directive.

In Portugal, four IBAs were identified along the Portuguese shore, two IBAs around Madeira, eleven IBAs around the Azores and and nine other areas were classified outside the Portuguese EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone). This is the second time for the Portuguese part of the project to be awarded a prestigious award. In 2008 it was granted the Banco Espírito Santo - Biodiversity prize, created with the aim of rewarding and supporting projects and initiatives for research, conservation and management of biological diversity in Portugal.

The LIFE programme is the EU's funding instrument for the environment. The general objective of LIFE is to contribute to the implementation, updating and development of EU environmental policy and legislation by co-financing pilot or demonstration projects with European added value.

All completed projects are initially assessed by the LIFE Unit's external monitoring team (the Astrale consortium). The monitors rank all the projects that end during the reference period to produce a first list of 20-25 "Best" projects. The final selection is undertaken by the Member States, each "Best" project being further evaluated by at least two Member States, and an average score is established (also taking into account the monitors' evaluation). The 5 top-scoring projects are the 5 "Best of the Best" projects.

For more information contact Boris Barov, European Conservation Manager at [boris.barov@birdlife.org](mailto:boris.barov@birdlife.org)

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### A new kit to protect our seas

The size of the Economic Exclusive Zones (EEZs) of EU countries exceeds several times the terrestrial area...but how much do we actually know about our seas? Do we know where our seabird breeding populations go while migrating, feeding or resting? Are we sure human activities such as fishing or maritime transport are sustainable?

Over the last 10 years BirdLife, through its Global Seabird Programme, has worked hard to answer these questions, which pose both a methodological and political challenge. After many years of research, innovation in methods, expert meetings and workshops, BirdLife is now proud to present two documents:

#### **Marine IBA Toolkit**

The Marine IBA Toolkit is both a step by step analysis of the identification process and a useful guide for EU countries to identify their needs in terms of seabird protection at sea. It is also a live document, that will be updated every six months, as part of our global strategy to always provide the latest and most cost-effective methods in marine research.

#### **Marine IBAs in the EU**

This document presents a fully detailed description of each EU country delivery on marine IBA networks and its current protection as SPAs. It present BirdLife Partners' National priorities in terms of marine International Bird Areas (IBAs) identification and also reviews EU Governments' support for the establishment of Marine Special Protection Areas (SPAs). This report will also be updated every six months, so recent developments, projects or SPA declarations are reflected, giving an accurate and realistic snapshot of the state of our Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) network in the EU.

"To protect our seabird populations and their habitats, we need to use a clear methodology to identify marine IBAs that can be universally applicable not only in Europe, but elsewhere", commented Iván Ramírez, European Marine Coordinator at BirdLife International. Besides, to guarantee those marine IBAs are legally protected, we need to increase the pressure on each EU Member State to declare them as Special Protection Areas according to the EU Birds Directive.

Download the Marine IBA Toolkit [here](#)

Download the Marine IBAs in the EU [here](#)

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### Preparing forests for climate change

BirdLife International responded to the the European Commission public consultation on the Green Paper on Forest Protection and Information in the EU: Preparing forests for climate change. The Commission is collecting opinions on a series of questions relevant to its intention to develop a more coherent policy on forest protection in the EU, especially in response to the challenges of climate change.

Through its response, BirdLife advocates for a stronger role of the EU in coordinating the way forests are managed, used and protected across the 27 member states. We believe society will benefit from stronger protection of forests as their biodiversity and ecosystem services provide much greater value today.

Therefore, in our response we call for:

- A European legal instrument for forest conservation
- Urgent actions to eliminate the contradictory policy objectives that pose a potentially grave threat to Europe's forests. For example, we pinpoint contradictions between EU biodiversity conservation and climate objectives and the EU bioenergy policy.

Download the *Response to consultation on Green Paper on Forest Protection and Information in the EU: Preparing forests for climate change* [here](#).

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## Business and biodiversity – in good company with nature



The BirdLife Global Council, which consists of BirdLife Partner Directors from all over the world, held their regular meeting at the BirdLife European Division office in Brussels, which coordinates and supports the work of all 42 BirdLife Partners in Europe.

The visit of the Global Council is of course an excellent opportunity to get to know the Belgian BirdLife Partners, Natuurpunt and Natagora better. Together with these two Partners which form 'BirdLife Belgium', BirdLife organised a networking evening for Belgian businesses around the theme of Business and Biodiversity.

Various BirdLife Partners, amongst which also NABU (BirdLife in Germany), co-sponsor of the event, presented new ways of collaborating with corporates which inspired the audience.



Electrabel/GDF Suez, the main sponsor of the event, presented its business and biodiversity initiatives and explained how a large group of Belgian customers chose green energy, a decision which pushes the company to look further for more 'green' opportunities. This event was the first in a row of yearly 'BirdLife meets businesses' events to create more awareness for the need to support biodiversity and to shape even closer strategic alliances with companies, which truly benefit the environment.

For more information contact Herlinde Herpoel, Head of European Communication and Marketing at [Herlinde.herpoel@birdlife.org](mailto:Herlinde.herpoel@birdlife.org)

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## BirdLife Europe's main successes celebrated in its first Annual Report



BirdLife's European Division presents its first Annual Report, covering the main achievements and successes of 2009.

"Through its pages, you will see how a small Secretariat and a big Partnership of grassroots conservation NGOs have been able to achieve significant results in the struggle for biodiversity and healthy ecosystems", remarked Angelo Caserta, Regional Director of the BirdLife European Division.

"You will learn more about our conservation work on the ground, aiming to save species and habitats, and our policy successes to safeguard the EU environmental legislation", Mr Caserta continued.

Since 1996, BirdLife has been a key partner of the European Commission and of other international organisations in developing, monitoring and implementing Species Action Plans for threatened birds, which describe in detail the reasons why a species is threatened and what needs to be done to save it.

In 2009, BirdLife produced Species Action plans for Red Kite *Milvus milvus*, Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus*, Semi-collared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata* and ones for Azores Bullfinch *Pyrrhula murina*, Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis* and Great Bustard *Otis tarda* were revised with the latest information on their populations status following conservation work on them.

Shaping public policy through high-profile advocacy and the translation of solid science into viable solutions are two of BirdLife's key strengths. As the leading voice for biodiversity on the EU policy scene, we continued in 2009 our work for proper implementation of the EU nature legislation.

The EU Birds Directive, which the BirdLife Partnership has been key contributor to, celebrated its 30th anniversary last year. At a BirdLife event to mark the Birds Directive anniversary the European Commissioner for the Environment said that "the Birds Directive is one of the great success stories of the EU environment policy".

In BirdLife International we reach out to millions of Europeans, and re-connect them with the wonders of nature. Communication, both internally within the Partnership and externally to stakeholders, plays a pivotal role in the

successful development of BirdLife as a respected and acknowledged NGO network in the EU scene but also in the whole of Europe.

"We know that a lot still needs to be done. We have to double our efforts if we are to create a general consensus that biodiversity and healthy ecosystems are a necessity for a sustainable future and to pass from consensus to action", concluded Angelo Caserta.

Saving biodiversity and people, protecting endangered birds species, their sites and their habitats would not be possible without you. Any contribution, whatever size, makes a real difference. By making a donation you directly support BirdLife's work on the ground to save biodiversity for the next generation.

For more information, please contact Maria Solernou, Funding Development Manager for Europe, at [maria.solernou@birdlife.org](mailto:maria.solernou@birdlife.org)

Download the Annual Report [here](#)

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### BirdLife Cyprus launches its monthly e-newsletter



BirdLife Cyprus has recently launched its monthly e-newsletter. Fully bilingual (English and Greek), it includes news, activities, events and various announcements. This new e-newsletter is an important milestone in the new membership and people engagement work programme that BirdLife Cyprus is now implementing, which was developed last January with the support of RSPB (BirdLife in the UK)

You can subscribe to the BirdLife Cyprus e-newsletter [here](#)

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### New Staff at the BirdLife European Division

Bruna Campos joined the team of the BirdLife European Division in Brussels as the new EU Financial Perspectives Policy Officer. Brunna is a joint BirdLife and Conservation International staff member, she follows the multi-annual financial framework, identifying funding priorities within the annual budgets for biodiversity and ecosystems, and her job involves working with financial mechanisms throughout different policies.

You can contact her at [bruna.campos@birdlife.org](mailto:bruna.campos@birdlife.org)

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### BirdLife on Air

**Following the new tradition, BirdLife provides an answer "on air" to some of our readers' questions related to biodiversity: this month the microphone is in the hands of Tim Stowe, Head of International at the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK)**



With a beautiful view on the park of The Lodge, headquarters of the RSPB, and sipping a cup of British tea, Tim Stowe agreed to answer some questions on European policies and projects.

***After this first period as Director of International Operations, what do you see as the main challenges and opportunities ahead in your team?***

When I started in November last year, the first challenge was to try to reconcile the urgency and need for conservation action across the globe with the resources we have available at the moment. Therefore I was very keen to try to assess whether we were working on the right priorities. There were some obvious issues, such as the

European Union, the International Year of Biodiversity, and the 26 country programmes the RSPB is supporting around the planet, working on a high number of species and pursuing various policy agendas. As everybody knows, biodiversity on the planet is not getting any better, and the question is whether we are working in the right places and on the right issues. Together with my new team we evaluated the work we do, also considering whether we should stop some of our projects. Following this assessment, there are already few projects we have started together with BirdLife. We are currently producing the International Species Recovery Strategy, which aims at identifying the threatened birds for which the RSPB is best placed, best able and best resourced to make a difference, such as in the UK Overseas territories, for example. This list will be transformed into a work programme, identifying precise actions and needs. We are also producing visions for engagement in the 26 countries we are working in, which will be accompanied by a 7 years indicative budget, more focusing on the real planning than on the money itself. Our objective with the Partners we are supporting is to allow them to work autonomously, without RSPB's help and assistance, and then withdrawing, as it is happening now in Spain. Of course there are other countries where it is more difficult to understand whether it will ever be the case, as it is so complicated for them to raise unrestricted incomes, as it happens in some African countries. The aspects we have not addressed yet are which habitats and which policy areas we really need to focus on. Of course the work on the rainforest is likely to be one of the main priorities. At the moment we are looking at all these aspects internally and at the same time we are restating our commitment to the BirdLife Partnership and its principles. Personally I am convinced this is the only model which will work in the future; there are no alternatives, we need an operational organization at the core of global bird conservation that is able to speak on behalf of others.

***We are reaching the end of the International Year of Biodiversity. If you had to evaluate the decisions and steps taken by the EU, would they be promoted or rejected? Which expectations do you have ahead of the CBD COP 10 Meeting in Nagoya?***

Notwithstanding that the EU has failed to reach the 2010 biodiversity target, the adoption of the 2020 target and the 2050 vision has been a really good development. The challenge now for the Belgian Presidency is to turn this target and this vision into a set of policies and they would do that through the biodiversity strategy that they will present at the end of the year. Insofar they did great in 2010. Now if they do what they ought to do by the end of the year, it would be brilliant! As far as the meeting in Nagoya is concerned, I think there will be two dilemmas: on one hand there is a perception that developed countries will prepare their targets and then impose them on the others. I recognize and understand their concern, but equally I believe we have to have our own target to manage our own resources and our own birds; on the other hand there is the resourcing issue, which brings us back to a discussion which is very similar to the one held in Copenhagen on the climate talks. The countries which experience the greatest biodiversity loss will ask the other countries to contribute to stop this loss, and this is going to be a big challenge. The EU will have to decide how and what to fund outside its territories and this will be of enormous importance.

Another big challenge is to increase the interaction among different EU regional policies, such as the Common Agricultural Policy or the Common Fisheries Policy and the biodiversity policy, making sure they respect the biodiversity target. I think this put a lot of pressure on the EU and on conservation organizations in Europe to make sure it does happen. It is quite a challenging time and if there is a global agreement in Nagoya that at least builds on what the EU has got, it would be fantastic! So I would love to have high expectations from Nagoya but I fear the same scenario that was played out in Copenhagen could get played out in Nagoya, which is equally tragic because in both cases the need to act is urgent.

***2011 will be the UN International Year of Forests and the RSPB is deeply involved in the Sumatra Harapan rainforest. How do you think the RSPB and BirdLife International could really make the difference and increase awareness about the need to save our forests?***

Together with BirdLife there are several ongoing projects already. We will soon meet the German Development Bank, KfW, as we have been working together in various parts of the world, and discuss how they could contribute to the Forest of Hope project. So we are closely working with BirdLife not only to promote this project, but also to look for more funds. We also have some other funding applications in at the moment for a big forest restoration project in East Africa with NABU and the Ethiopian, Ugandan, Kenyan and Tanzanian BirdLife Partners. This is building on existing programmes doing forest restoration already, but also looking at increasing the advocacy capacity in each country to lobby for the climate change negotiations.

In general, I think we can make the difference in three ways: publicise the problem and the possible solutions, looking for funds and demonstrate that we can actually improve the situation on the ground, and influence the REDD negotiations as much as we can, to ensure that forest preservation and restoration are strongly funded mechanisms under the climate change agreements. The Harapan Forest has now the first restoration license in Indonesia, and there is now as much license being applied to restore forests, than there is for cutting it down, which is fantastic if compared to two years ago, when there was not a single license for restoring the forest. So, challenging times ahead!

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Events

International events

- July- December: Belgian Presidency of the European Union

-7-11 September 2010, Victoria, Canada: 1st World Seabird Conference - Seabirds: Linking the Global Oceans  
[www.WorldSeabirdConference.com](http://www.WorldSeabirdConference.com)

- 16-18 September 2010, Bükk National Park Directorate, Eger, Hungary: Conservation of Saker Falcon *Falco Cherrug* in Europe - Presenting the Results of the Hungarian-Slovak Saker Conservation LIFE-Nature Programme and Other Saker Conservation Programmes.

More at [http://www.sakerlife.mme.hu/uploads/File/Registration\\_Saker\\_Conf\\_in\\_Hungary%2016\\_18\\_09\\_2010\\_announcement.pdf](http://www.sakerlife.mme.hu/uploads/File/Registration_Saker_Conf_in_Hungary%2016_18_09_2010_announcement.pdf)

- 15 October 2010, Bruges, Belgium: EEAC-conference on Sustainable Land Use  
[www.minaraad.be](http://www.minaraad.be)

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