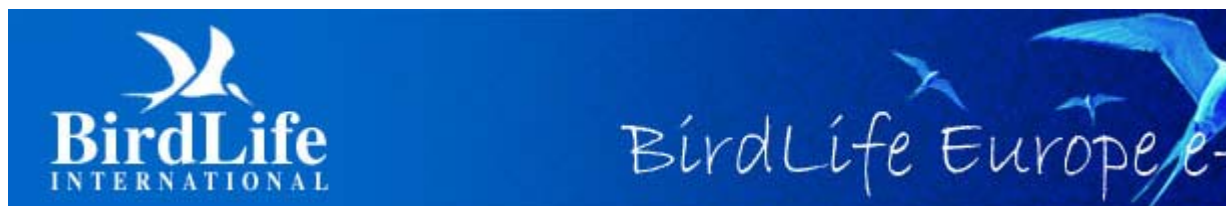


From: BirdLife International [birdlife-international@birdlife-e-news.org]

Sent: 04 December 2009 09:57

To: Alessia Pautasso

Subject: BirdLife Europe e-news December 2009



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Editorial: At the threshold of a magic year



Dear Reader,

Rarely has a year ended with so much hope, and so much fear. The Copenhagen climate summit has frequently been labeled as one of the most important meetings in history, and looking at what is at stake this is hardly an exaggeration: either world leaders will commit now to fight jointly against planetary disaster, or they will be blamed by future (suffering) generations as those who chose not to act despite knowing the consequences.

Less than two weeks later we will be entering 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity. It will hopefully bring to everyone's attention the fact that the silent loss of species, habitats and ecosystems is not only much more dramatic than we think, but also that it is preventing humanity from both addressing climate change and achieving long-term economic recovery. In 2010 the governments of Europe and the world will have to reveal their true intentions for the planet: do they want to turn the tide of biodiversity loss through ambitious new targets and credible strategies, or do they escape, once again, into empty rhetoric? Here the same goes as for climate change: there is a clear choice to be made, and there is no excuse of not knowing the consequences of our actions.

It is very difficult for me to leave BirdLife's European Division in such a crucial time, but for family reasons I will move back to Germany at the end of this year – from where I will certainly continue working for biodiversity and the environment.

The six years I spent in Brussels made two things very clear to me: Firstly, fighting for a united, sustainable Europe is more important than ever. Secondly, there are impressive people in Brussels, in NGOs and Institutions, who work day and night, fueled by their deep passion for the environment, to fight for our planet – sometimes against very big and powerful lobbies. I would like to thank all of them for their fantastic work and wish them all

the strength, patience and support they need for the next challenging year.

With best wishes for a happy and healthy 2010 to all our readers and supporters,



Konstantin Kreiser
EU Policy Manager
BirdLife International European Division

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EU protected areas starved of cash



Natura 2000, the EU's impressive network of protected areas, does not receive enough money from the various EU funding streams, according to a new report published by BirdLife International on 13 November 2009. The report looked at both the financing needs of keeping the Natura 2000 sites in good condition and the availability of EU funds to this effect in six countries ranging from Spain to Finland and The Netherlands to Bulgaria.

Assuming that half of the necessary funds should come from the EU, there is a funding gap of between 45 and 89% of the total funding need in Austria, Finland, The Netherlands and Spain. In Slovakia and Bulgaria, where the potentially available funds from the EU Structural and Rural Development

Funds could cover the funding needs, however, it is unlikely that the required amount of money will actually be spent by the governments concerned. The study indicates that the so-called "integration option", the inclusion of nature conservation objectives in the various EU funding streams, is not working properly.

This finding comes when the new TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) report for policy makers is made available to the public. This report highlights the economic sense for proper site conservation because of the benefits and services they provide to humanity. There is a section devoted to the socio-economic benefits of protected areas. In the light of these findings, it would make sense for the EU to invest more in its world-class protected area system, not only to preserve its rich natural heritage but also for economic reasons.

"The main reason for this gap is the lack of political will on part of the EU Member States to allocate the sums needed for managing the Natura 2000 networks from their allocation of EU funds", commented Zoltan Waliczky, Head of International Biodiversity Policy of the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK). "With so many competing interests at stake, nature and sustainability always pulls the short straw. For the integration to work properly, major sums of money need to be ring-fenced in each of the EU funds which can only be spent on nature conservation"

You can download the report "Financing Natura 2000: assessment of funding needs and availability of funding from EU funds" at http://www.birdlife.org/eu/pdfs/N2000_Final_composite_report_09.pdf

Visit the TTEB website at www.teebweb.eu

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Fisheries Council: much more needed to get birds off the hook



At the last Fisheries Council, on November 20th, the European Commission presented a policy statement to the Member States outlining a list of actions aimed at tackling the plight of seabird bycatch in fisheries.

BirdLife International estimates that at least 200,000 seabirds are killed yearly in European fisheries as so-called by catch. One such victim, the Critically Endangered Balearic shearwater *Puffinus mauretanicus*, is declining at such an alarming rate that it may go extinct within a human generation.

BirdLife commended the Commission for bringing the issue of seabird

bycatch to the attention of the Fisheries Ministers, given the undeniable evidence about the extent and urgency of the problem and lack of concerted EU Action so far.

However, BirdLife International shares the concerns of the UK Minister Huw Irranca-Davies, expressed during the Council meeting, that to be able to tackle seabird bycatch in an effective way we need much more than what has been outlined in the Commission statement. Firstly, emergency actions are required to prevent the deaths of the most threatened species. Secondly, without further delay the Commission should deliver a comprehensive EU Action Plan for seabirds as originally envisaged in the legislative plan of DG Mare 2009. Without such a Plan and its implementation, the EU will not only fail to meet its own ten-year old commitment but will also continue to lag behind other fishing nations who have shown how much can be achieved, in some cases reducing bycatch to almost zero, creating a win-win situation for both nature and fishermen.

For more information please contact Tatiana Nemcova, Senior EU Advocacy Officer at Tatiana.Nemcova@birdlife.org

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From Barcelona to Copenhagen

The global climate change talks are at a crucial stage. Two years ago in Bali, the world's nations agreed to sign a new climate treaty in Copenhagen in December 2009, to update the Kyoto Agreement which expires in 2012. The five-day meeting in Barcelona last month was supposed to finalize the preparations for Copenhagen. However, whilst there was progress on some technical issues, far more noticeable in Barcelona was the anxiety, frustration and anger at the lack of high-level political commitment to emissions reductions and to financial support for developing countries. The plenary sessions and press conferences were tense, with accusations being flung back and forth about who is holding back progress.

It is clear to BirdLife that the world's most polluting nations (including EU Member States), under pressure from the most polluting industries, are the most significant barrier to a treaty in Copenhagen, using as excuses the current economic crisis and President Obama's difficulties with US legislation. As President Obama himself might say, "now is the time" for visionary leaders, for politicians brave enough to take unselfish decisions and reject the arguments of polluting lobbies. During the coming EU Presidency in 2010, Spain's President Zapatero must move from his recent fine words in the UN to clear future commitments and strong EU leadership.

And now more than ever, citizens groups such as BirdLife Partners must demand that our political leaders go to Copenhagen to make the final effort for a climate treaty: write letters, demonstrate, make a lot of noise (see www.tcktcktck.org) and join in the global day of action on 12 December. Wild birds and their habitats can't lobby on climate change, so we must all do so on their behalf.

For more information please contact David Howell, Head of Environmental Policy at SEO/BirdLife (BirdLife in Spain) at dhowell@seo.org

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Ecosystems and adaptation in Europe – working with nature, not against it



It is today beyond doubt that in order to tackle climate change successfully, we must not only reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases but also adapt to the inevitable impacts of climate change. Nature conservation will increasingly have to take climate change into account in the design of reserves, the conservation of individual species, and so on. Many other sectors in society – such as agriculture, forestry, coastal protection, urban planning and inland flood management – will also have to adapt to the effects of climate change.

This presents both risks and opportunities for biodiversity and hence for sustainability at large. Measures that do not take the health and resilience of ecosystems into account can easily lead to perverse outcomes. Hard coastal defences, for example, may lead to loss of habitat and a reduction in valuable ecosystem services. Increasing the use of pesticides in agriculture, as a response to spreading pests and diseases,

may only damage the biodiversity that underpins resilience in agricultural systems. What we need, then, is an approach to adaptation that always considers wider effects on ecosystems and seeks synergies with biodiversity conservation and other sectors.

In many cases, nature conservation can in fact be the best answer to some of the challenges posed by climate change. Conserving or restoring coastal wetlands can be a very cost-efficient way of protecting against rising sea levels; healthy, natural floodplains can be our best response to increased flood risk; and conserving soils and biodiversity in agricultural lands can significantly improve their resilience to climate change. As part of a wider adaptation strategy, these ecosystem-based measures can deliver not only an inexpensive and readily available form of adaptation, but also a host of other benefits, not least biodiversity conservation.

The role of nature in society's adaptation to climate change must now be fully acknowledged not only in a Copenhagen agreement but also at the national and local levels. Here, BirdLife International and its national Partners have an important task and opportunity to spread the message: in adaptation, we have to work with nature, not against it.

For more information please contact Linus Blomqvist at linus.blomqvist@gmail.com

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A fair deal on climate change – an African perspective



Copenhagen sees politicians and world leaders gather together to prevent dangerous climate change. Ambition and political determination will be essential to ensure an effective and fair deal for people and the planet.

African and other developing countries are in the climate front line, already suffering from climate impacts. They will also be disproportionately impacted into the future. In the end, however, unabated climate change will threaten the sustainable development and the survival of all.

African leaders have called for a fair, inclusive, effective and equitable new agreement in Copenhagen that will benefit the climate and vulnerable countries and be undertaken in the context of poverty eradication, sustainable development and the need for gender equity. An effective deal must be legally binding with the ambition necessary to rescue us from dangerous climate change, keeping us as far below 2 degrees C global warming as possible. This means deep cuts in emissions from developed countries, recognising their historical responsibility. It requires action to halt and reverse tropical forest loss – and the means to do this so that indigenous people's rights and biodiversity are safeguarded.

A fair deal must protect vulnerable people and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change, and must help poor countries limit future emission without stifling their development. It must fully support developing countries' adaptation needs, prioritising vulnerable people and recognising the vital role healthy ecosystems play. A key outcome must include new, additional, sustainable, accessible and predictable finance as well as environmentally sound technology transfer from developed to developing countries.

"Even as we defend our corner we cannot but highlight our common humanity and destiny. We cannot but reach out to everyone to curb the insanity that is global warming." H.E Ato Meles Zenawi, Prime Minister of Ethiopia (Taken from his Keynote Address at the Special Session of the African Partnership Forum on Climate Change, Addis Ababa September 3, 2009)

For more information please contact Jane Gaithuma, Regional Policy and Advocacy Co-coordinator at the BirdLife Africa Secretariat at Jane.Gaithuma@Birdlife.or.ke and Joanna Phillips, Head of International Sustainable Development Policy at the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) at Joanna.Phillips@rspb.org.uk

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Carbon free bioenergy: creative accounting and perverse climate outcomes



Bioenergy represents a set of renewable energy technologies that clearly has a key role to play in the world response to climate change. It is becoming however increasingly clear that the EU, like the United States and other countries, is at risk of getting its policies wrong and end up with perverse

climate and sustainability outcomes. Recent scientific articles have highlighted the pitfall of considering all biomass burning to be “carbon free”.

When biomass, such as feedstock for biofuels, is grown on land cleared from natural habitats such as forests and grasslands, huge emissions negate its benefits for decades or even centuries. If existing agricultural land is used, the result can be displacement of food production, again resulting in environmentally harmful indirect land use change. The EU has brought in some weak standards to try and deal with the first problem, but has yet to come up with even an attempt to deal with the second one. The same problems potentially affect the use of solid biomass, for example for heat and power production, but with an extra twist: when wood is extracted from forests, in most cases there is no land use change, but the forest carbon stock is greatly diminished and can take many decades to recuperate.

This latter problem is currently being completely ignored by the EU, as indeed are biodiversity and other environmental impacts that inappropriate biomass extraction can entail. While the Copenhagen talks try to hammer out a global deal on reducing emissions, including addressing deforestation and forest degradation, the EU is actively undermining the same objectives through its bioenergy policy.

For more information contact Ariel Brunner, Senior EU Agriculture Policy Officer at ariel.brunner@birdlife.org

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The Climate Wave in Belgium!



If we miss the opportunity given at the Copenhagen Summit, the planet will not get a second chance. We will then be on the path for an irreversible climatic chaos... with all collateral damages on biodiversity.

Natagora and Natuurpunt (BirdLife in Belgium), have been active on this topic for a few years already. Natagora's programme "climate-biodiversity: the same fight!" aims to inform citizens about the link between biodiversity and climate change and about what they can concretely do to contribute in reversing the trend by reducing their carbon footprint: limiting the dependency from oil, consuming local & seasonal fruits and vegetables, choosing environmental

friendly products...

Natagora and Natuurpunt are both members of the Climate Coalition in Belgium, where many NGOs work together for this common goal. The Climate Coalition will organize "Climate Wave", a major demonstration in Brussels on 5 December in order to raise the awareness around the importance of the Copenhagen Summit.

Are you taking part?

For more information about the Climate Coalition please visit <http://www.coalitionclimat.be/?lang=fr>

Or contact Philippe Funcken, Director of Natagora at philippe.funcken@natagora.be or Wim van den Bossche, Director of Natuurpunt at wim.vandenbossche@natuurpunt.be

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Falcons rally to Africa with the world's smallest satellite



This summer, researchers of MME/BirdLife Hungary (BirdLife in Hungary) have tagged 8 adult female Red-footed Falcons *Falco vespertinus* with the world's smallest satellite transmitters. The miniature Platform Transmitter Terminals (PTT), weighing only 5 grams, allowed fragile Red-footed Falcons weighing 130-200 grams to be fitted with these state of the art devices for the first time ever. These backpack mounted transmitters may provide location data with some 150 m accuracy, aiding the identification of precise migration routes or major stop-over sites along flyways.

Beside the location and extent of wintering grounds, the precision also allows to map roosting sites at their winter quarters. The exact location of their wintering grounds so far was an absolute ornithological mystery!

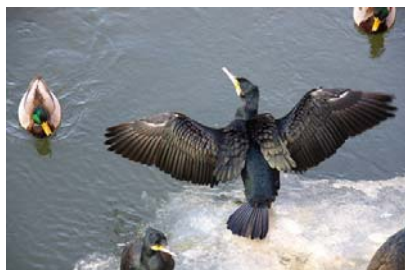
Within a month after a well orchestrated departure, most birds arrived to southern Africa, and are now roaming in Southern-Angola. Heni, the fastest female, covered 7000 km in just 16 days! It was a real "falcon rally" as they crossed the Mediterranean Sea and the Sahara in 3 days, sometimes flying day and night. Researchers are now looking for funds to follow their birds with an inland expedition to survey precise habitat use and assess possible threatening factors for Red-footed Falcons in their wintering grounds.

MME/BirdLife Hungary has been working in a long-term partnership with the Hungarian National Park Directorates for the conservation of Red-footed Falcons. Their work was co-financed by the EU's LIFE Nature fund.

For more information and maps, visit the project's website at www.falcoproject.hu

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Great Cormorant – Bird of the Year 2010 in Germany and Austria



Many people were really surprised when NABU (BirdLife in Germany) and BirdLife Austria (BirdLife in Austria) chose Great Cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* as their Bird of the Year 2010. Species chosen before had often belonged to endangered species decreasing in their countries. How would the nature conservation societies justify the current decision? "This bird has been mercilessly chased by fishermen and anglers for centuries, being nearly extinct in Middle Europe hundred years ago", explained Olaf Tschimpke, NABU's President.

The Great Cormorant, a fish-lover, has so far only been looked upon as a pest bird until the EU Birds Directive provided it with consistent legal protection.

Since then, its comeback began.

Today, Cormorant- numbers have significantly increased nearly all over Europe. Germany holds 24.000 breeding pairs, while Austria up to 250, a number which becomes even higher if we consider the thousands of migrants and wintering birds. The conflicts with the fishery and hobby anglers have been rising again, due to Cormorants establishing breeding colonies along coasts, lakes and rivers. Again, every fish eaten by a Great Cormorant is considered to cause crop damage or to endanger rare fish species.

Affected by these arguments, several German federal states have been allowed to reduce its numbers via special derogations. "Legalized with controversial decrees, 15.000 birds are shot again every year, some of them within nature reserves and even during the breeding season. This has to be stopped forever", added Olaf Tschimpke. NABU and BirdLife Austria promote solutions and agreements, which will save both, the future of Great Cormorants and of fishermen.

For more information, please contact Dr Markus Nipkow, Officer for Ornithology and Bird Conservation at NABU at Markus.Nipkow@NABU.de or Gabor Wichmann, Conservation Manager at BirdLife Austria at gabor.wichmann@birdlife.at

Become a Friend of the Great Cormorant at <http://www.nabu.de/aktionenundprojekte/vogeldesjahres/2010-kormoran/kormoranfreunde/index.html>

Visit BirdLife Austria website at <http://www.birdlife.at/presse/index.html#20091009>

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How to promote Nature's miracles? – BirdLife's second Education, Communication and Fundraising workshop



On 18 and 19 November in Jurata, Poland, over 20 BirdLife European Partners met for the 2nd Communication, Education and Fundraising workshop "How to promote Nature's miracles?", funded by the Spring Alive Campaign and supported by the Mitsubishi Corporation Fund for Europe and Africa and the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK). The workshop, in its second edition, proved to be extremely multicultural, with Partners attending from Spain to Armenia and from Sweden to Turkey.

The aim of the second workshop was to find out how educators, communicators and fundraisers within the BirdLife European Partnership can work even closer together in promoting birds and biodiversity while securing the necessary funds to implement BirdLife's future plans. Materials were exchanged, press articles and fundraising plans evaluated while the aspect of informal networking gave all 35 participants a good change to get to know each other and prepare for BirdLife's upcoming joint work around the COP in Copenhagen and the Year of Biodiversity. Future workshops will focus more on enhancing specific skills, while working in break-out groups and facilitating the learning process between the 'older' and 'younger' Partners of the BirdLife family.

Joanna Kalinowska – Development Director of OTOP (BirdLife in Poland), the hosting organization, stressed the

importance of the workshop as an opportunity for BirdLife Partners to exchange ideas, learn and discuss the activities for the upcoming International Year of Biodiversity.

Contact Magdalena Chrzanowska, Spring Alive Coordinator, OTOP (BirdLife in Poland) at magdalena.chrzanowska@otop.org.pl

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BirdLife in Denmark 2010: in a changing climate



DOF (BirdLife in Denmark) has just published "BirdLife in Denmark 2010: in a changing climate", which introduces the organization and its activities. It is grouped around four mutually dependent tracks, which are conservation, knowledge, enjoyment and participation.

In each chapter there is a description of DOF activities, of their goals for the future and the related climate issues.

For over 100 years DOF has worked for a rich and diverse bird life. Its dedicated members have strived to understand and protect wild birds by monitoring and communication, and by influencing legislation, nature management and law enforcement.

To DOF it is obvious that one of the severest world wide threats to nature and man is climate change. There are changes in the habits of migrating birds in Denmark, and marine birds are having trouble finding their usual food in the oceans around Denmark. Furthermore, rising sea levels will mean the end of internationally important bird habitats on many Danish coastal meadows, islets and in shallow fjords.

"The task to protect nature, mitigate climate change and deal with its effects wisely must be carried out on an international basis," states DOF's chairman, Christian Hjorth. "We strongly support BirdLife's main messages on climate

change which include the need to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation through the conservation and restoration of natural forests, and recognize the role that ecosystems play in helping adaptation to climate change."

Download the publication at <http://www.birdlife.org/eu/pdfs/dof.2010.pdf>

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Meet the BirdLife European Partnership

In every issue you have the chance to meet a staff member from the BirdLife European Partnership and learn more about their key priorities and favourite projects

For this issue, we've teamed up with Nada Tosheva, Executive Director at BSPB (BirdLife in Bulgaria)



I am Nada Tosheva, and since 2007 I am the Executive Director of the Bulgarian Society for the Protection of Birds (BSPB, BirdLife in Bulgaria). I am leading a team of 22 dedicated staff who inspire BSPB members involved in species recovery and monitoring, site conservation and protection, public awareness and citizen science projects.

Always interested in natural sciences, the turbulent events of 1989 saw me choosing the History Department of the Sofia University, turning the pages of European and Balkan history.

My love for nature however remained and after graduating at the University I joined the Wilderness Fund Society, which at the time was supporting the survival of the Balkan population of the Brown Bear.

Living behind the Iron Curtain I used to discover the world with the wild swans and ugly duckling of Hans Christian Andersen; I traveled thousands of miles

with the wild geese of Nils Holgersson. So the birds were always around me and I was well prepared for them. As my grandmother used to say, "The first time you see a Stork do not forget to take off your martenitza (a special spring adornment made of red and white yarn) and hide it under a stone. And remember never ever destroy a Stork nest because our home may be blighted", or how she used to warn me, "If you see a big flock of swallows and if they fly close to the land, it is going to rain".

When I was 12 years old, I thought I saw the most beautiful bird in the world – the Eurasian Hoopoe *Upupa epops*. The same year in a small wetland close to my place I saw a Black Stork *Ciconia nigra*, a White Stork *Ciconia ciconia* and a Great Blue Heron *Ardea herodias* flying off together. I was sure this was the greatest wonder ever!

Through the years my knowledge about birds has deepened, but one thing I will constantly remember is that people and birds will always be bound together, sharing the same emotions like love, hate, fear, pride, sadness, and hope.

You can contact Nada at nada.tosheva@bspb.org

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Events

International events

- July- December 2009: Swedish Presidency of the European Union

- 5-8 December 2009, Alentejo, Portugal: VI SPEA Ornithology Congress and the IV Iberian Ornithology Congress

<http://www.spea.pt/index.php?op=congresso2009>

- 15-16 December 2009, Uppsala, Sweden: Providing a knowledge basis for sustainable hunting and biodiversity conservation. Streamlining hunting bag statistics in the EU.

<http://www-conference.slu.se/gamemonitor>

- January-June 2010: Spanish presidency of the European Union

- 22-26 March 2010, Cáceres, Extremadura, Spain: 18th International Conference of the EBCC -"Bird Numbers 2010: Monitoring, indicators and targets"

The deadline for early registration is 20 January 2010.

<http://www.ebcc.info/index.php?ID=370>

<http://www.seo.org/ebcc2010/frmHome.html>

-7-11 September 2010, Victoria, Canada: 1st World Seabird Conference - Seabirds: Linking the Global Oceans
www.WorldSeabirdConference.com

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