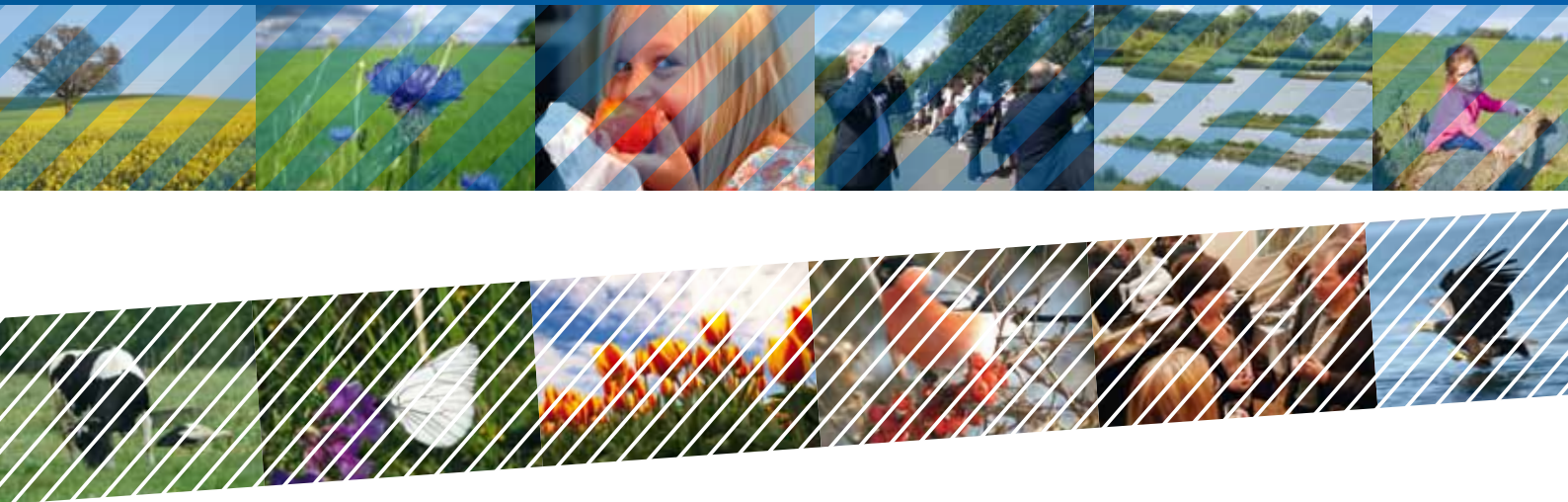


Annual report

Working together for birds and people 2009




BirdLife
INTERNATIONAL

BirdLife International European Division

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2009: the year of the Ox

Dear reader

Very few people in Europe know that, according to the Chinese Zodiac, 2009 was the year of the Ox. The Grey Ox or Kouprey *Bos sauveli*, once present in an area covering Cambodia, southern Lao PDR, south-east Thailand, and western Vietnam, is today Critically Endangered and possibly Extinct, according to the IUCN Red List.

Among the causes of its decline, we find a high level of hunting as well as degradation of the natural ecosystems due to urban development, agriculture (especially agro-industry farming) and energy production.

Will the next “year of the Ox” (2021) still be a time of celebration rather than a time of mourning? At BirdLife, we believe so. By focusing on the protection of birds and their habitats, we help saving many other living species, including the ox.

Birds are a great indicator of our planet’s overall health. By observing and measuring their population trends, their migratory paths, their ranges, we actually perform a health-check of the whole planet. And by suggesting mitigation and restoration measures, we contribute to improving the state of the world and the conditions of all living species, including human beings.

In a year of global challenges, of economic recession and failing climate agreements, BirdLife’s successes offered reason for hope.

In this first annual report of the European Division of BirdLife International, we aim to present you with the main achievements of BirdLife International in Europe in 2009.

Through these pages, we will tell you 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.

We will also tell you that still a lot needs to be done. We will 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.

Just think about what happened to Rapa Nui, a Polynesian island in the south-eastern Pacific Ocean! The inhabitants of the forest-covered island overexploited its natural resources to a point that the island’s ecosystem collapsed, causing death to many. The earth is a small island in the vast universe... Haven’t we learned our lesson? Can we afford to lose the ox and the hundreds of vulnerable, endangered and critical endangered species?

No, we cannot! At BirdLife we work every day to reverse the trend, stop the loss of biodiversity and restore it.

We know that we are not alone in this struggle, neither in the Division in Brussels nor in our 42 Partners across Europe. We prevent extinctions thanks to the public and private donors that believe in the work we do and recognize in BirdLife a good and cost-effective investment.

We contribute to improved policies for the conservation of biodiversity by working together with visionary and caring politicians and decision-makers. We reach new audiences by allying with other Civil Society Organisations and with forward-looking businesses, farmers, hunters and land owners.

We also monitor and protect birds and habitats thanks to our over two million members, supporters and concerned citizens in Europe who struggle for a better future.

This is our struggle and our raison d’être. This is BirdLife, the world’s local Partnership for biodiversity and birds.

Angelo Caserta

Regional Director for Europe, BirdLife International

Werner Müller

Chair of the European Committee, BirdLife International

our vision

Birds are beautiful, inspirational and international. Birds are excellent flagships and vital environmental indicators. By focusing on birds, and the sites and habitats on which they depend, the BirdLife Partnership is working to improve the quality of life for birds, for other wildlife (biodiversity), and for people.

BirdLife's aims are to:

- prevent the extinction of any bird species
- maintain and where possible improve the conservation status of all bird species
- conserve and where appropriate improve and enlarge sites and habitats important for birds
- help, through birds, to conserve biodiversity and to improve the quality of people's lives
- integrate bird conservation into sustaining people's livelihoods

Who we are

What is BirdLife International?

BirdLife International is the world's largest Partnership of local Civil Society Organizations actively engaged in the conservation of birds, their habitats and global biodiversity, working with people towards sustainability in the use of natural resources. The Partnership, with its headquarters in Cambridge (United Kingdom), operates in over one hundred countries and territories worldwide and is supported by over 10 million people. BirdLife is the worldwide leading authority on the status of birds and their habitats. BirdLife promotes sustainable living as a means of conserving birds and all other forms of biodiversity. www.birdlife.org

BirdLife's European Division

The European Division is one of the six BirdLife regional offices in the world and is composed of

an international team of permanent staff working on conservation, capacity building, policy, management, finance, fundraising, advocacy, science, communication, marketing and administration. The Division supports the European Partnership, which consists of 42 independent, grassroots Civil Society Organisations, governed by a democratic programme. BirdLife's Partners are recognised and appreciated both at national and international level for their experience and capacity in the study of birds and their habitats and in protecting successfully the conservation of the wider environment through public campaigning and educational activities.

With more than 1500 staff and tens of thousands of skilled volunteers, BirdLife, together with its national Partners in Europe, owns or manages more than 5,800 sites totaling 320,000 ha.





Europe and the EU hold virtually the entire world population of the Red Kite *Milvus milvus*

conservation

keeping nature's future intact

BirdLife's conservation strategy has four pillars: saving species, protecting sites, conserving habitats and empowering people. All our work contributes to one of those strategic goals through a broad range of actions: conservation science, conservation planning, policy and management, integrating biodiversity conservation objectives in sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry and international development cooperation.

saving species: a challenging but rewarding task!

Since 1996 BirdLife is a key partner of the European Commission and of other international organisations in developing, monitoring and implementing Species Action Plans for threatened birds. A rigorous drafting and consultation process, involving the best experts, scientists and environmental managers from across the range of the species ensures high quality and comprehensive action plans. The process of agreeing on the priority threats to address, setting objectives and designing actions to implement takes about one year of work and represents a good example of multi-stakeholder cooperation in the conservation of globally threatened species.

Action plans in focus in 2009

Following the priorities identified in BirdLife's European Programme, in 2009 we focused

on six species on the global IUCN Red List of threatened species: new plans were developed for the 'Near Threatened' Red Kite *Milvus milvus*, Red-footed Falcon *Falco vespertinus* and Semi-collared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata*. The action plans of the 'Critically Endangered' Azores Bullfinch *Pyrrhula murina*, the 'Endangered' Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis* and the 'Vulnerable' Great Bustard *Otis tarda* were evaluated and revised, according to the latest information on their population status and conservation measures were implemented.

Species action plans describe in detail the reasons why a species is threatened and what needs to be done to save it.

Red Kite:

a flagship species for European conservation

Europe and the EU hold virtually the entire world population of the Red Kite, thus making this beautiful bird of prey a special responsibility and a flagship for European conservation. It is a bird of mixed fortunes. While some of its northern populations have made a spectacular recovery following intensive conservation measures and the



The conservation of the Semi-collared Flycatcher *Ficedula semitorquata* depends partly on the protection of old oak, beech and riparian forests.

successful reintroduction to the UK, in the south poisoning by rodenticides (any substance that is used to kill rats, mice and other rodent pests) is causing continuous declines, most sharply in Spain. The increasing numbers of wind farms across Europe pose a growing risk to this charismatic bird of prey and work is underway in Germany and other countries to develop measures to avoid additional mortality.

Red-footed Falcon

This colourful small falcon makes spectacular migrations from the steppe areas of eastern Europe to southern Africa. The most important European populations of this bird are found in the Carpathian basin (Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Serbia) while its stronghold is believed to be in Ukraine and southern Russia. The action plan developed by BirdLife this year was largely based on the experience of the Hungarian-Romanian LIFE+ project focusing on the falcon and its curious relationships with another much more common bird - the Rook *Corvus frugilegus* whose nests are preferred by falcons for breeding. While nest boxes successfully maintain a stable population of the Red-footed Falcon in the Carpathian countries, saving the falcons in the long term is only possible through ensuring a thriving population of rooks in the countryside. This is a challenging task, given the recent declines of this species in many countries due to unfavourable agriculture, persecution or destruction of its breeding habitats.

Semi-collared Flycatcher

This poorly known cousin of the more widespread and better known Pied and Collared Flycatchers is a habitat specialist, depending on specific conditions in its preferred broad leaved forest habitats. Found in a handful of southeastern European countries from the Balkans to the Caucasus, its conservation is closely linked to the protection of old oak, beech and riparian forests. The development of a species action plan for this bird benefited from the recently completed mapping of Biologically Important Forests in Romania and Bulgaria, carried out by the respective BirdLife Partners there.

Biologically Important Forests meet a set of biodiversity related criteria that are often associated with lack of human intervention. Such forests are extremely rare in Europe, but at the same time are incredibly important for biodiversity. The forests are mapped within a project carried out by BirdLife's European Forest Task Force in northern and eastern Europe. For more information visit: www.forestmapping.net



Old forests include a lot of dead wood essential for many forest bird species as well as many other forest organisms.

Caring for Europe's forests

Can biodiversity and forest management co-exist?

A BirdLife Forest Workshop
22-23 October 2009, Purkersdorf, Austria

Forests represent about one third of Europe's Natura 2000 network and their role in maintaining biodiversity and ecosystems is huge. Proper management tools, taking into account the wellbeing of species, habitats and general biodiversity are essential. A review of the best and worst practices in forest management from the biodiversity perspective was the main topic of the annual workshop of BirdLife's European Forest Task Force. The workshop, involving BirdLife Partners and external experts and scientists, took place in Purkersdorf (Austria) kindly hosted by the Österreichische Bundesforste (ÖBf - Austrian Federal Forests) and BirdLife Austria, who are gratefully acknowledged.

Conserving Wilderness in Europe - what a wild idea!

BirdLife International and many of its national Partners supported the Wild Europe initiative – a high

Non intervention management is an approach to protected areas management that relies on the free reign of natural ecological processes to shape the ecosystem.

profile movement aiming to bring recognition to the value of Europe's last wilderness and devise approaches to conserve it. Some Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are truly wild and self sustaining; others require management to maintain their value. BirdLife endorses a view that non-intervention should be considered as the main approach to conserving certain habitats, such as old forests, as this is the only way to retain truly authentic biodiversity riches.

Strengthening BirdLife's conservation network

European IBA Coordinators Workshop

From 27-30 September 2009, 28 staff from 23 European BirdLife Partners met in Smardzewice, Poland for their first workshop on regular Important Bird Areas (IBA) since the last gathering in Lisbon in 2006.

The participants reviewed the progress made against the targets set in BirdLife Partnership's European Programme for 2009–2012. One of the main topics was IBA monitoring, involving sharing experiences and new ideas on how to strengthen this important activity across Europe. With over 4,700 sites to monitor and conserve, this is a major effort that often requires adequate funding and innovative solutions. Success stories were presented, from establishing IBA caretaker networks in Armenia and Poland, through methods and challenges of collecting data from caretakers in Portugal and Denmark, to ensuring long term funding support for monitoring Natura 2000 sites in the Czech Republic.

Partners from Spain, the Netherlands and Poland presented examples of their strategic approach to the conservation of IBAs and demonstrated how directing limited resources to ensuring successful

IBA Caretakers are people, individuals or groups, who live near IBAs and volunteer their skills, knowledge and commitment to help the conservation of these sites.

outcomes at key sites can set valuable legal precedents that help to protect many other sites in the network. Lessons learned and ideas were shared among the Partnership to pursue back home.

BirdLife helps to enlarge its network in the Western Balkans

In April 2009, BirdLife joined 120 participants from 20 countries at the first Adriatic Flyway Conference, organized by EuroNatur in Montenegro (www.adriaticflyway.com). Most participants represented national conservation institutes and organisations from countries along the Adriatic coast, i.e. the Western Balkans.

The conference provided a space for strategic discussions about the future development of the European Partnership in the region, a significant gap in BirdLife's European network. BirdLife's session on IBA identification and monitoring helped the organisations in the region to review the status of the Important Bird Area (IBA) networks in each country and identify gaps for further survey work. As a follow-up of the conference, BirdLife secured a funding proposal 'Wings across the Balkans' that will help seven national conservation NGOs from five of these countries (Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia, Montenegro and Macedonia), with support from DOPPS (BirdLife in Slovenia), to develop their capacity and prepare them for future accession to the European Union.

Also, BirdLife approved a raft of proposals for new IBAs in Serbia, which were published in September 2009.

BirdLife's major contribution to the international conservation debate

BirdLife and its European Partners provided multiple high profile contributions to two major international conferences in 2009.

The 7th Conference of the European Ornithologists' Union in Zurich in August (<http://www.eou2009.ch>) was attended by 380 participants, and addressed core BirdLife topics such as impact of land-use change on farmland birds and causes of Palearctic-African migrant declines. A keynote plenary by Juliet Vickery (RSPB, BirdLife in the UK) shed new light on how to develop agri-environment schemes to help farmland birds.

The 2nd European Congress of Conservation Biology in Prague in September (<http://www.eccb2009.org>) witnessed 1,200 participants, including many students. BirdLife Partners presented success stories in a special session on Natura 2000: Irina Mateeva described how BSPB (BirdLife in Bulgaria) used scientific data to identify candidate Special Protection Areas while Przemek Chylarecki (OTOP, BirdLife in Poland) described the successful campaign to save the Rospuda Valley.

At both conferences, BirdLife presented a novel method to identify national responsibilities for conserving bird species, based on species' global and European threat status and species' concentration in particular countries.

BirdLife Partner staff and the Division meet at the IBA workshop in Smardzewice (Poland)



policy

BirdLife at the heart of the EU decision-making progress

BirdLife: a bold and successful voice for nature

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 EU nature legislation. Our approach combines constructive dialogues with stakeholders and institutions with tough campaigning for the respect of EU rules, as in the case of Member States allowing harmful projects in Natura 2000 sites or breaking the rules on hunting.

On land, our work has focused on sites management; at sea, we have pioneered new approaches for the identification and designation of marine protected areas. As the leading environmental NGO involved in agriculture policy, we developed ground-breaking proposals for the reform of the EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), as well as high quality analyses of existing policies.

We also reached out to the more progressive parts of the farming community, looking for constructive solutions which hold the potential to make a real difference. BirdLife has been at the forefront of developments and rang the alarm on the harmful impacts of biofuels, while providing important contributions to the development of the EU sustainability standards. In 2009, we campaigned relentlessly, often in a broad coalition, to achieve a fundamental

rethink of the currently flawed European bioenergy policy.

From adaptation to climate change to its impacts on biodiversity, we increasingly engaged in the fight against global warming, highlighting the intricate and unbreakable ecological links which tie the climate and the biodiversity crisis together.

At BirdLife, we always try to address conservation challenges in their full picture, from the basic science to the on-the-ground delivery of solutions; and very often policy work is the central pillar needed to hold the arc connecting the two.

Saving special places – BirdLife's campaign work on the EU Nature Directives

Celebrating 30 years of successes under the EU Birds Directive

The Birds Directive, the EU's oldest piece of nature legislation and one of the most important, was adopted unanimously by the Members States in 1979 as a response to increasing concern about the declines in Europe's wild bird populations resulting from pollution, loss of habitats, as well as unsustainable use.

"The Birds Directive is one of the great success stories of EU environmental policy", stated European Commissioner for the Environment, Stavros Dimas



The Natura 2000 network of protected areas in the EU proved to be an excellent tool to help preserve Europe's nature.

on 2 April 2009 when BirdLife International together with more than 100 invited guests, acknowledged the important achievements of the Birds Directive.

"The Birds Directive is as relevant today as it was 30 years ago and has a key role to play in delivering our biodiversity policy for many years to come" concluded Commissioner Dimas. BirdLife International has continuously supported a better implementation of the Directive, and still promotes its importance and its role in protecting European birds and biodiversity. On a video message presented at the event, Mr. Hamidou Mamoudou, an African conservationist from Naturama, the BirdLife Partner in Burkina Faso conveyed African conservationists'



BirdLife celebrates the 30th anniversary of the EU Birds Directive in April 2009.

gratitude to the EU for protecting African migratory birds during their summer stay in Europe. "We wish we could have a Birds Directive too", he concluded. A birthday cake was cut by Mr. Dimas, and Mr. Frantisek Pelc, the Czech Deputy Minister for the Environment. Mr. Pelc, and the Members of the Europe-

an Parliament Mrs. Béguin and Mrs. Brepoels, were invited to blow out the candles and raise their glasses to the EU Birds Directive. BirdLife and its Partners have been key contributors to the successes of this EU policy and will continue to do so.

The Nature Directives and Natura 2000: excellent tools to preserve the EU's nature - better implementation is the next step!

BirdLife International with its extensive knowledge and experience in bird species, sites and habitats provided a significant contribution to better implementation of the Birds and Habitats Directives, especially through its Partners in the EU. BirdLife Partners continuously provided relevant and reliable data, expertise and policy positions to European and national decision makers. In 2009, BirdLife acted as a "watchdog" to promote the full and correct implementation of the Directives at EU and national level, including monitoring and financing of implementation. Following its multistakeholder approach, BirdLife successfully worked with landowners, hunters and industries to find a common ground and ensure strong support and wide acceptance of the Nature Directives.

In 2009 BirdLife International saved special sites threatened by development projects and showcased ways how nature conservation can work along developments if there is political will and if the Nature Directives are fully respected.



The Rospuda Valley in Poland is one of Europe's last truly wild places.

Via Baltica - saving Poland's Rospuda Valley

Key Natura 2000 sites in north-east Poland, including the Rospuda Valley, one of Europe's last truly wild places, were under threat from road projects on the so-called 'Via Baltica' international road corridor, linking Helsinki to Warsaw. The corridor was being upgraded by a series of separate projects rather than being planned in a strategic way. For over seven years, the Polish authorities continued to plan individual projects without properly considering the obligations of the Nature Directives. This case captured the public imagination, clearly demonstrating how much people care about biodiversity - people camped out on site in the freezing cold winter of 2007 to stop machinery starting work, wrote petitions and complaints and wore green ribbons as a symbol of support. BirdLife International and OTOP (BirdLife in Poland) in coalition with other NGO's ultimately succeeded in getting the European Court of Justice to send an injunction to prevent damage to a Natura 2000 site.

After extensive delays and under pressure from the EU, the new Polish Government decided to take a new approach and integrate biodiversity objectives into the transport plans. In 2009, the Polish authorities announced an alternative route for the entire Via Baltica expressway. This will now avoid important wildlife sites, including the world famous Biebrza marshes. As they also chose a new route for the Augustow Bypass - Rospuda Valley is now officially safe!

This fantastic result for biodiversity demonstrates the power of the Nature Directives to facilitate the planning of sustainable projects that simultaneously achieve development and biodiversity objectives. It also shows the importance of a local-global network like BirdLife, able to link grassroots mobilisation on the ground and advocacy and legal work at EU level.

Stop the illegal killing of wild birds - no spring hunting for Malta!

Spring hunting and the illegal killing of birds in Malta over the past years posed a real conservation threat to the population of various bird species including threatened ones e.g. Lesser Kestrel *Falco naumanni* and Pallid Harrier *Circus macrourus*. In 2008 and consequently in 2009, the spring hunting season was not opened in Malta, partly thanks to the intensive work of BirdLife International and BirdLife Malta and to the interim decision of European Court of Justice in the case. In September 2009 the Court ruled that the Maltese Government breached EU law when allowing spring hunting seasons from 2004 to 2007. The verdict left an opportunity for the Maltese Government to derogate for spring hunting if all the conditions and obligations of the Birds Directive are properly fulfilled. The extensive record of illegal killing of birds in the country is, however, evidence that no spring hunting should be allowed if all criteria are to be fulfilled. BirdLife International and BirdLife Malta continue to follow this case until the Birds and Habitats directives are fully respected.

Advocating for a better protection of nature's best kept secrets in Bulgaria

As the awareness of the climate change crisis is increasing, alternative energy sources such as wind power are gaining importance everywhere. BirdLife International recognises the importance of green energy. However we insist that the full environmental impacts of renewable energy are assessed in advance and minimised during the strategic planning phase. Wind farms have a potentially high impact on birds and other animals: directly, through killing and injury, and indirectly, through disturbance and habitat loss. Some groups of birds, like large raptors, waterbirds and migratory birds are particularly vulnerable to such impacts.

Cape Kaliakra is an important Natura 2000 site on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast, and showcases unique species and habitats such as the last remnants of steppe in south-eastern Europe. Birds like the globally 'Endangered' Red-breasted Goose *Branta ruficollis*, regularly use the nearby sea for roosting and farmlands for grazing. What's more, the Kaliakra site lies on an important bird migration route for soaring birds such as Storks, Cranes and Eagles flying from their European breeding to African wintering grounds.

Unfortunately the site is not fully protected yet under the EU Birds and Habitats Directives, leading

to the fact that in 2009 (and still today) over 360 projects including green energy projects (like wind farms, solar farms), or energy, water and land consuming ones (like hotels and golf courses), have been proposed (and some of them built) in the area. This causes a real and imminent threat to one fifth of the bird habitats on the site.

BirdLife International and BSPB (BirdLife in Bulgaria) campaigned intensively to stop the destruction at this and other Natura 2000 sites. Currently, the European Commission deals with infringements of the EU law at this site and BirdLife expects that the issue will be either solved soon or it will be referred as a case to the EU Court of Justice.

Study - How green is the EU's development aid?

BirdLife International, FERN and WWF presented in 2009 a study analyzing to which extent EU Development Cooperation tools have been designed to integrate environmental concerns into the aid delivery mechanisms. To do so, the report looked at 21 geographically diverse Country and Regional Environment Profiles, and assessed them on the quality and information they provide using a standardised checklist. While recognizing the importance of these profiles and progress on their transparency, the

BirdLife's study on EU development aid showed that although the EU has made progress in 'greening' its development aid, it still has a long way to go if it wants to achieve true sustainability.



© Iola Leal Riasco (FERN)



Identifying protected areas at sea : Cory's Shearwater *Calonectris diomedea*

three organisations also highlighted some significant shortcomings. These include inadequate considerations of some key challenges such as climate change and degradation of ecosystems, inadequate involvement of civil society and local communities in the profile drafting process, and lack of clear recommendations on how the environmental issues identified as country or regional concerns in the Country and Regional Environment Profiles can be addressed through the EU development aid process. BirdLife, through its global Partnership is well placed to assess the real impact of the EU aid on local level. The main conclusion of the study was that although the EU has made some progress in 'greening' its development aid, it still has a long way to go if it wants to achieve true sustainability.

It was an important first step in a continuous dialogue with the European Institutions and other stakeholders to ensure that the EU meets its sustainable development and poverty eradication commitments.

Identifying protected areas at sea

Over the past two decades, BirdLife played a vital role in the establishment of the Natura 2000 network in the EU, by identifying Important Bird Areas (IBAs) on the basis of sound data and robust scientific criteria. Several European Court of Justice sen-

tences have indeed recognized the IBA inventory as a benchmark for the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) which, together with Special Areas for Conservation designated under the Habitat Directive, form the Natura 2000 network.

As the completion of the Natura 2000 network on land has now been achieved, BirdLife is increasingly shifting its attention to the more challenging task of identifying marine Important Bird Areas and advocating for their protection as Special Protection Areas. Over 550 marine IBAs have been identified to date in European waters. While most of these are coastal sites, 2009 has seen landmark efforts to map IBAs offshore as well. Partly thanks to LIFE+ funding, BirdLife Partners have completed inventories in Spanish and Portuguese waters and made great progress in identifying IBAs (candidate SPAs) in the Baltic Sea. The methodologies developed during these projects are applicable to all marine Member States across Europe, paving the way for an effective EU-wide implementation of the EU nature protection legislation at sea.

Campaigning for a more biodiversity-friendly agricultural policy

Agriculture is vital for Europe's biodiversity while farmland birds (e.g. the Eurasian Skylark *Alauda arvensis*) are the group of birds faring worst in the EU.

Putting Europe's scavengers back to work: Griffon Vulture *Gyps fulvus*





© Ariel Brunner

BirdLife is an active campaigner for a better EU Common Agricultural Policy which rewards farmers for the delivery of public goods.

Tackling the ecological crisis in our countryside has been a long-term BirdLife priority and in 2009 we have maintained our engagement as the most prominent environmental NGO working to reform the EU's still flawed Common Agriculture Policy (CAP). Our cutting edge analysis provided important insights into the way current EU policies work on the ground.

In the "Through the green smokescreen" report we have analyzed the systematic failures of the 'cross compliance'-regime, which is supposed to ensure that farmers benefiting from public subsidies respect basic legal and good practice rules.

Through the "Could do better" report, we analyzed the EU rural development policy and its contribution to biodiversity conservation, highlighting the bad past practices and policies and proposing detailed constructive proposals for better implementation of existing rules, as well as for better policies.

Coordinating a group of 5 major NGOs, we proposed a detailed blue print for a better CAP that could reward farmers for the delivery of public goods such as biodiversity, watershed management, climate mitigation and adaptation and landscape enhancement. We also pursued constructive dialogue, across the board and in particular with the farming world. Highlights have been the online public consultation we ran on our new CAP proposal

and a landmark joint statement with the European Landowners Organization, making the case for a "green deal" on the future CAP. Finally, we have increasingly engaged in debates about the global impacts and implications of EU agriculture and policy choices, addressing key questions in food security, climate change & biodiversity - The role of European agriculture in a changing world.

To download the study, please click on the following link: http://www.birdlife.org/eu/pdfs/Food%20Security_new.pdf

Putting Europe's scavengers back to work

EU sanitary rules requiring the removal and incineration of dead livestock have been introduced in the wake of the BSE (aka mad cow disease) crisis. These rules have had the unplanned side effect of depriving vultures and other raptors relying on carrion from their main food source. Especially in the Iberian Peninsula, vultures have been providing farmers with a free and efficient natural "sanitary service" for millennia, but the new rules meant that vultures were often facing starvation while carcasses had to be expensively tracked to incinerators and burned using fossil fuel. Through its work with the European Commission and Member States, BirdLife ensured amendments to the EU Animal by-products Regulation, which now includes specific derogations allowing leaving carcasses to be eaten by vultures and other wild species: a win-win for nature, farmers and the public purse!

communicating and fundraising

Giving nature the voice it deserves

BirdLife International reaches out to millions of Europeans, and re-connects them with the wonders of nature. The BirdLife European Division works closely together with its 42 European NGO Partners in engaging with their citizens, while influencing decisions taken by governments in favour of biodiversity and the wider environment.

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.

In 2009, the European Division invested in improving the communication, media and campaigning skills of the communication professionals within the Partnership. Two workshops were organised, one to improve links between the policy and

communication work to support advocacy campaigning and the other one to strengthen fundraising, communication and education skills, to keep the public engaged and ensure funding is retained throughout the years. The workshops were also an excellent way to strengthen the network in an informal way and exchange ideas and best practices for future campaigns.

On fundraising, the European Division invited the Partnership's fundraisers to a three day workshop where different speakers shared their knowledge on working with foundations, corporates, exploring new media and improving membership recruitment, membership development and how to write a fundraising strategy. A total of 23 fundraisers from 16 BirdLife Partners took part in the workshop which was evaluated very positively and cost effective.





© Herlinde Herpoel

BirdLife International present at the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, December 2009

One major European BirdLife campaign received congratulations in 2009 on its prolonged success by H.I.H Princess Takamado, BirdLife's Honorary President, during a birdwatching event in London halfway through the year. Together with the Mitsubishi Corporate Fund for Europe and Africa, Spring Alive's main sponsor, BirdLife's campaign focusing on teaching children about the arrival of migrants in spring, celebrated the fantastic result of 100.000 observations registered online during spring.

Externally, the Division maintained its contacts with the EU press corps and organised various well-attended events for MEPs and EU officials, one of them being the celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the EU Birds Directive in April 2009.

Furthermore, the communication department of the BirdLife European Division also assists the other BirdLife Divisions in the world with its expertise and skills. It took the lead in developing a format to present BirdLife's regional programme, a short summary of BirdLife's strategy for 2008-2012. The brochure's design was used as an example by nearly all Divisions, improving BirdLife's unified image to the outside world.

In December 2009, BirdLife Europe's communication team led the outreach work for BirdLife's presence at the Climate COP in Copenhagen. BirdLife's stand at the Bella Centre in Copenhagen where the negotiations took place welcomed thousands of visitors and the majority of BirdLife Partners all over the world received the latest news on the negotiations and support in the planning of press and PR-work.



Income and expenditure*

	Total 2009	Total 2008
Incoming resources		
Partners	420.258 €	410.156 €
Grants and Donations	334.831 €	318.540 €
EU Commission Funding	402.841 €	396.000 €
Other Income	5.820 €	-
Total Incoming Resources	1.163.750 €	1.124.696 €
Resources expended		
Staff Costs	741.718 €	801.193 €
Communications	13.226 €	33.268 €
Equipment and Supplies	59.180 €	23.539 €
Support Grants	160.097 €	161.930 €
Office Costs	69.056 €	76.484 €
Professional Services	69.837 €	58.170 €
Travel, Conferences and Events	69.799 €	51.209 €
UK Support Costs	206.689 €	293.862 €
Support charges to restricted funds	-	-
Total resources expended	1.389.602 €	1.499.655 €
Net (deficit)/surplus before transfers	(225.852 €)	(374.959 €)
Funds transfers from BirdLife International	199.414 €	468.820 €
Exchange differences	69.604 €	(10.345 €)
Net movement in funds	43.166 €	83.516 €
Total funds brought forward	144.009 €	60.493 €
Total funds carried forward	187.175 €	144.009 €
Assets		
Bank and Cash	308.128 €	168.735 €
Debtors	55.914 €	38.292 €
Accrued Income	164.879 €	171.053 €
Total	528.921 €	378.080 €
Liabilities		
Accruals and sundry creditors	69.513 €	88.214 €
Due to BirdLife International	272.233 €	145.857 €
Total	341.746 €	234.071 €
Net assets	187.175 €	144.009 €
Reserves and project funds		
Restricted	187.175 €	144.009 €

* The BirdLife International European Division is a Dutch Foundation, Stichting BirdLife Europe, and its operating office is set in Brussels.

Acknowledgements 2009

Thank you for supporting us!

We would like to thank all these organisations for trusting us and for helping us to protect biodiversity.

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SVS/BirdLife Switzerland
Vogelbescherming Nederland (VBN) - BirdLife in the Netherlands
The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)- BirdLife in the United Kingdom

Governance

The European Committee guides and advises the European Division Office on behalf of the BirdLife European Partnership and of the Global Council. In particular it:

- Develops the European programme, assists the Division in its implementation and monitors the common achievements
- Advises on the workplan and budget of the European Division
- Decides on high-level European policy
- Reviews the development of the European Partnership
- Helps secure funding for the European Programme and Division operating costs
- Assists in communication
- Convenes Regional Partnership Meetings
- Represents the European Region in the Global Council

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With your help, we can give Europe's biodiversity the future it deserves

Saving biodiversity and people, protecting endangered bird 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 generations. Please contact our Funding Development Manager for Europe for further information.

Maria Solernou

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The BirdLife European Partnership

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*Working together
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BirdLife International European Division

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