

Lake Natron scoops top award

Title Lake Natron has won the top Blue Globe Award in the first World Wetlands Network Globe Awards. The prestigious award was conferred to the Wetlands ecosystem at a ceremony held during the CBD COP 10 meeting in Nagoya Japan. The award was given in recognition of recent efforts to improve the management by, among other things, posting of a Ramsar Site Manager by the Wetlands Unit, posting of a Site Conservation Manager by Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania (WCST-BirdLife in Tanzania), the development of an Integrated Management Plan and establishment of two Wildlife Management Areas and the completion of a Single Species Action Plan. The Award was received by Eng Bonventure Baya on behalf of the Government. Mrs Monica A. Kagya, the Assistant Director in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism conferred with the organisers before the start of the awards and expressed satisfaction with the move to give the award to Lake Natron. While receiving the Certificate and the Blue Globe, Eng Baya said it was a great honour for the Lake to receive the the Blue Globe - highest level of WWN Awards - for best practice in management. He said it both an encouragement as well as a challenge for the Government to even work harder to continue promoting the protection of the Lake to ensure it is conserved . He called for all stakeholders to continue working together. WWN gives awards gives the Blue Award for best practice in management, Green for restored habitats and Grey for wetlands in danger. BirdLife International congratulated the Government of Tanzania for the award to Lake Natron and noted recent developments to improve management of the lake. Ken Mwathe, who spoke on behalf of BirdLife said: "more than ever, there was need for stakeholders to ensure that the integrity of Lake Natron and the honour from the new award are maintained. Through WCST, BirdLife was implenting a set of community livelihoods projects at Lake Natron to show that local communities can benefit from conservation".