

Title Two partners of the BirdLife Africa partnership; BirdLife Botswana (BLB) and BirdLife Zimbabwe (BLZ) have shared their experiences on Wildlife Clubs activities through papers presented by their respective Environmental Education Officers at the 30th annual Environmental Education Association of Southern Africa (EEASA) conference recently held at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, South Africa from the 11th to 14th September 2012. The conference was held under the theme Environmental Learning, Agency and Social Change. The conference provided an opportunity for delegates to critically reflect on the contribution of environmental education in providing solutions to environmental challenges that confront the region. Mr Rueben Njolomole of BirdLife Zimbabwe and Yukiko Maki-Murakam of BirdLife Botswana both presented papers based on evidences emerging from the implementation of environmental education and conservation activities under the Wildlife Clubs of Africa (WCA) programme. Mr. Rueben Njolomole's paper which centred on the 'Contributions of the Bird Awareness Programme To Sustainable Natural Resources Management in the Driefontein Grasslands IBA, Zimbabwe' highlighted the extent to which BirdLife Zimbabwe's Bird Awareness Programme could influence positive change in sustainable natural resources management in the Driefontein Grasslands IBA. The paper argued that environmental education, if well implemented, has the potential to develop people's capabilities to be agents of change. Similarly, on her part, Yukiko Maki-Murakam also presented a paper titled 'The Potential of Bird Activities in Schools in Botswana'. Based on her on-going environmental education activities and interactions with teachers and students in Botswana, Yukiko outlined BLB's concept and methodology of environmental education, the challenges as well as a way forward.



Reuben Njolomole-BLZ (Credit: Reuben Njolomole)

Beside these presentations, the conference also provided a very good opportunity for the two BirdLife partners to build new and strengthen existing networks for future collaborations on the Wildlife clubs of Africa programme as well as other similar projects with other organizations in the Southern Africa community. EEASA is an international association of academics, researchers, and practitioners of all disciplines, civic society, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and others interested in the environment and sustainable development in southern Africa. Its annual conference next year will be held in Malawi. Prepared by: Agbaam Callistus Project Officer- WCA phase 2