

Update from Libya ? emerging conservation despite crucial times

Title

Despite the crucial situation in Libya, an NGO called Libyan Society for Birds (LSB) continues working hard for nature conservation in the western region of the country, maintaining awareness of Key Biodiversity Areas. Several meetings were held with local relevant stakeholders, Imams and local communities in order to improve their knowledge of nature conservation and remind them of their role within the current situation.

For the first time in the region, LSB created two environmental clubs – one in the school of Ain Alghazalah and the other in the University of Tobrouk. Unfortunately the activities in these clubs went slowly and depended upon exam plans and the security situation.

The major challenge to Libyan bird conservation is the use of weapons for hunting throughout the year, especially during migration. But this year, LSB confirms that there has been a decrease in hunting during the migration period. The effort made by ex-hunters, who are involved with the organization, has been very successful.

In Libya, civil society was forbidden under Gaddafi and while NGOs have been emerging since 2011, they have no experience of preparing work plans.

"It's an exciting time in the region," says Liz Smith, Manager of the CEPF Mediterranean Regional Implementation Team. "We have given a small grant to LSB. This is a great opportunity for them, because it is the first grant of this size they have received and gives them a chance to really prove themselves.

We are currently the only organisation that has directly funded an environmental NGO in Libya."

**BirdLife International - including its Middle East office and the BirdLife Partners DOPPS/BirdLife Slovenia and LPO (Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux, BirdLife in France) - is providing the Regional Implementation Team (RIT) for the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) in the Mediterranean Basin Biodiversity Hotspot (CEPF Med). Find out more at www.birdlife.org/cepf-med.*

**The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) is a joint initiative of l'Agence Française de Développement (AFD), Conservation International (CI), the European Union, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Government of Japan, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and the World Bank. A fundamental goal is to ensure civil society is engaged in biodiversity conservation. More information on CEPF can be found at www.cepf.net.*