



Title

[Grupo Jaragua](#) (BirdLife in the Dominican Republic) has been awarded the prestigious George Arzeno Brugal Grand Prize. This is in recognition of over 24 years of continuous work on the sustainable management of the Dominican Republic's biodiversity, with a special emphasis on its work for the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve.

The prize was awarded to Grupo Jaragua by Fundación Brugal – the foundation of Brugal rum company (the world's third largest rum producer) during the 22nd "Brugal Cree en su Gente" (Brugal Believes in Its People) Awards.

Selected from amongst 167 candidates, awards (of US\$24,000) were presented to outstanding academic, government and civil society institutions in each of six categories – Art and Culture, Community Development, Education, Social Care, and Health – with Grupo Jaragua winning the Environmental Protection and Advocacy category. Grupo Jaragua was then chosen by a panel of 20 judges as the overall winner of the (US\$48,000) George Arzeno Brugal Grand Prize – the biggest award offered from the private sector in the Dominican Republic.

"We are very proud of the awards given by Fundación Brugal to Grupo Jaragua. Having our long-term commitment to the nation's protected areas and biodiversity recognised and supported by such an important sector of our society is an honour," said Yvonne Arias, Executive Director of Grupo Jaragua.

"We also see these awards as recognition by Dominican society for the entire environmental movement in the Dominican Republic."

Grupo Jaragua will use the awards to help continue their efforts to monitor ecosystems and threatened species in Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas; to defend the unique biodiversity within protected areas; and maintain vital environmental education programs, particularly with children and young people through summer camps.

Grupo Jaragua's work at the Jaragua-Bahoruco-Enriquillo Biosphere Reserve is multi-faceted - from working with local communities, to land purchase, to working with corporates, to scientific surveying, to sustainable livelihoods initiatives and fighting development. The Reserve has eight active [Local Conservation Groups](#) taking care of three [Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas](#), which grew from a small group of local volunteers in 1995.