

Title

The Atlantic forest of South America could merit an award for many reasons. An award for being an outstanding biological centre of endemism – so many unique animals and plants in one area. Or an award for being one of the top five 'hotspots' for biodiversity conservation in the world despite not receiving as much public attention as its neighbouring Amazon. Or an award for still managing to survive as a biological area after suffering extensive logging and degradation – only 7% of original Atlantic forest remains.

Prêmio Muriqui is an award not for the forest itself but for the people and organisations in Brazil that are helping with its survival. SAVE Brasil (our BirdLife Partner in Brazil) have won this year's prize, recognition for over a decade of conservation work to protect the remaining fragments of Atlantic forest. The award is recognised as one of the most important tributes to environmental actions in Brazil.

This year SAVE Brasil celebrates its 10th anniversary and this award is great public recognition marking this date. It has been 14 years of work, 10 of which as SAVE Brasil and four as a Programme of BirdLife international, from a cohesive, dedicated and committed team.

SAVE Brasil was created with the mission: "To preserve birds and natural environments for a healthy planet for



current and future generations."

One example is SAVE's work to conserve the Atlantic Forest at [Serra do Urubu](#) in Pernambuco State since 2004. Just 2% of Pernambuco's Atlantic Forest survives, which is recognised by BirdLife as an [Important Bird and Biodiversity Area \(IBA\)](#). It is home to at least 20 other endemic species from the Atlantic Forest slopes of Alagoas and Pernambuco, several of them new to science. Most endemic birds from this region are considered threatened with extinction.

SAVE Brasil's strategy for the long-term restoration of the forests of the Serra do Urubu region includes developing agro-forestry systems which help rebuild forest connectivity and reduce the pressure for timber and charcoal from the remaining forest patches. To ensure long-term conservation, local people have received on-the-job training and are qualified to undertake forest restoration activities elsewhere.

Prêmio Muriqui is granted by the Atlantic Forest Biosphere Reserve Council (which is part of the UNESCO World

Network of Biosphere Reserves) to public or private institutions that stand out in their work for biodiversity protection, sustainable development and dissemination of traditional and scientific knowledge.

"Despite these achievements, we consider that there is the need for permanent action towards environmental preservation in the country,"

said Jaqueline Goerck, Executive Director of SAVE Brasil.

"Thus, SAVE Brasil restates its commitment to promote actions for the conservation of other areas in the country and the protection of birds in critical situation of endangerment."

More information: [Saving Atlantic forest in Brazil and Paraguay](#)

[Serra do Uruba, Brazil - Forest of Hope site](#)