# Stronger BirdLife Partnership takes action for Mediterranean migrants

Title

The BirdLife Partnership's project to develop flyway conservation capacity in the Mediterranean - funded by the Mava Foundation - is already delivering results, including a hunting ban at an important stopover site in the Balkans, and progress in two Mediterranean hunting and trapping blackspots. CZIP (BirdLife in Montenegro) has secured a two-year hunting ban at the Lake Sasko Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) in Montenegro, which has been identified by BirdLife as an "IBA in Danger" because of threats to its biodiversity. BirdLife Cyprus has drafted the first ever national Strategic Action Plan to address illegal trapping, and BirdLife Malta led the formation of a coalition of Maltese NGOs for the abolition of spring hunting. SPNL (BirdLife in Lebanon) held its first training course to prepare hunters for the national hunting license exam. Badly sited powerlines and windfarms can kill and disrupt the movements of migrating birds. CZIP and the Macedonian Ecological Society (BirdLife Partner) are engaging with the energy sector to ensure Environmental Impact Assessments are carried out properly. AAO (Tunisian Partner) has established new partnerships with Tunisian Society for Electricity and Gas and other key stakeholders in the energy sector, and is participating in discussions on measures to reduce negative impacts of energy infrastructure on migratory birds. The first year of the project also saw two of the participating national NGOs, CZIP in Montenegro and GREPOM in Morocco, accepted as BirdLife Partners, thanks to institutional capacity building support from the BirdLife Partnership. All eight participating NGOs are now members of the BirdLife Partnership (the other six being AAO in Tunisia, BirdLife Cyprus, BirdLife Malta, the Macedonian Ecological Society, SPNL in Lebanon, and Doga Dernegi in Turkey). Also with capacity-building support from BirdLife, two more Balkan NGOs joined the BirdLife Partnership this year: Ugura BIOM from Croatia, and the Bird Study and Protection Society of Serbia. An NGO assessment mission to Algeria took place early this year, and BirdLife is providing capacity development support for an NGO in Albania. A Balkans Capacity Development Officer is now in place to seek resources to develop new Partners and strengthen the BirdLife Partnership in the region. The MAVA-funded project aims to achieve long-term improvements in conservation in the Mediterranean part of the Africa - Eurasia flyway, by establishing and strengthening a dynamic network of conservation NGOs working effectively with local people, national governments and the international community to protect key species, sites and habitats. The participants came together at BirdLife's World Congress to share experiences, review their already impressive progress, and consider their next steps. The event was an excellent opportunity for the BirdLife NGOs to learn about what the others are doing, and to cooperate more closely and effectively. Among other ideas for future collaborative activities is the development of an integrated campaign against hunting and trapping for the whole Mediterranean region. Thanks to the presence of Lynda Manson, Director General of the MAVA Foundation, the World Congress event also provided an opportunity to showcase the projects achievements to the MAVA Foundation, and to thank them for their generous support.