

Swarovski Optik announces new conservation commitment

Title

Delegates attending the inaugural meeting of the Sociable Lapwing International Working Group in Syria, last weekend, received this welcome news when Swarovski Optik announced they would be providing further funding to support international conservation action for the species through the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme. Swarovski Optik has now become the primary funder of international conservation action for Sociable Lapwing, as institutional funding from the UK Government Darwin Initiative draws to a close after five years. In addition to announcing an extension of their current support as a BirdLife Species Champion for a further three years, Swarovski Optik delighted the group by providing optical equipment to the new range state partners that have now joined the group. The top of the range optics included five pairs of Swarovski's brand new **EL 50 Swarovision binoculars** and two ATM 80 HD spotting scopes. Announcing their continued support, Andreas Pittl - Head of Marketing- at Swarovski Optik - offered congratulations to the group for their achievements to date and wished the newly extended working group future success. In a message sent from the Tyrol, Pittl also said "We believe in the team and your planned activities to reach our common goal - preventing the incredible Sociable Lapwing from extinction. I want you to know Swarovski Optik is supporting you every step of the way. We have increased our annual financial contribution and are providing this optical equipment to help new members of the Sociable Lapwing International Working Group with their important monitoring and fieldwork. Please keep up the good work!"



Dr. Mohammed Al Salameh of the Saudi Wildlife Commission using the equipment in the field.

Following the announcement and presentation of equipment, Omar Fadhil of Nature Iraq said "I have always dreamt of using a pair of Swarovski binoculars but never thought I would - so receiving these new Swarovision EL50s is quite incredible. I see them as a piece of 'precious art' which will help my work now and be a legacy to future generations that join us protecting the wildlife of Iraq." Swarovski Optik first became a BirdLife Species Champion for Sociable Lapwing alongside RSPB at the British Birwatching Fair in August 2008. RSPB have confirmed they will also continue as Species Champions alongside Swarovski Optik for the next three years, so both organisations can continue to work in partnership, supporting and promoting international action for the species. In common with all BirdLife Species Champions a small proportion of Swarovski Optik's contribution is also used to advance conservation action for other globally threatened birds. In this way Species Champions are collectively helping to prevent the extinction of threatened species on a larger scale than would otherwise be possible. [See here for details of the BirdLife Preventing Extinctions Programme.](#) Further news covering the conservation planning outcomes of the Syria meeting will be posted to the [Amazing Journey website](#) shortly once conclusions have been consolidated and announced formally by the AEWA Secretariat.