

World's oldest international conservation organisation celebrates 90 years

Title Ideas move the world but only if people act upon them. And that's exactly what happened at midday on June 20 1922, when a remarkable group of people from different countries met in London at the private home of the UK Minister of Finance. United by their passion for birds they concluded that the only effective answer to the growing trade of wild bird feathers or the threats to migratory birds across the continents had to be through co-ordinated international action. This was the birth of the world's first true international conservation organisation, as Professor Kay Curry-Lindahl decades later described the International Council for Bird Preservation (later evolved into BirdLife International). In the decades that followed the world became more populated, industrialised, the problems for nature bigger and more complex, and the need for a co-ordinated response even greater - a vision that the world's leaders attending the Rio+20 Earth Summit should follow. A need that resulted in the creation of BirdLife International in 1993, today the world's largest grass root Partnership for nature with national organisations in 116 countries. United by a common vision BirdLife today is a global Partnership for local action and global impact.



Dr T. Gilbert Pearson, co-founder and ICBP President from 1922-1938

“BirdLife International's 90th anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on what we've achieved together and help us focus on the future we want,” said Dr Marco Lambertini, BirdLife's Chief Executive. “Much has changed in ninety years but the fundamentals have not. The rationale for international collaboration has only grown stronger and so the crucial need to empower local conservation capacity around the world. It all seems so logical today but it was truly visionary then”, commented Dr Lambertini. BirdLife Partners around the world will be marking

the anniversary with a series of feature articles in their magazines and other materials over the coming months, including marking the occasion together at the BirdLife Partner World Congress next June 2013 in Ontario, Canada. Active conservationists, once numbered in dozens, are now counted in millions, with ten million supporters of the BirdLife Partnership alone. We all owe a debt to the handful of people who came together to form the ICBP at 12 noon on June 20 in 1922.