

Filling the information gap: how bird data can help set, meet and track national biodiversity targets

Title

To coincide with the Conference of Parties (COP11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), currently taking place in Hyderabad, India, BirdLife International has [published a guide](#) to assist governments in developing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) using data on birds, the best known class of organisms. At the previous COP in 2010, the Parties—comprising nearly all the world's Governments—adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. This provides a comprehensive global framework for achieving the vision of 'Living in Harmony with Nature', including the 20 Aichi Targets. For the Strategic Plan to succeed globally, it must be implemented at national level by every one of the Parties to the CBD. The guiding mechanism for this is the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which sets national conservation targets, taking into account national needs and circumstances, and the indicators to measure progress against them. But for many countries, developing NBSAPs may not be an easy task, because the information needed for effective planning is often patchy and incomplete. In *Developing and implementing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans: How to set, meet and track the Aichi Biodiversity Targets*, BirdLife explains how data on birds can provide the information needed to set and track 18 of the 20 Aichi Targets nationally.

Birds are better known than any other comparable group of organisms. Being sensitive to environmental change and relatively easy to monitor, indicators based on bird data are very useful for tracking progress in addressing the biodiversity crisis. As the IUCN Red List authority for birds (and the International Thematic Focal Point for birds for the CBD's Clearing House Mechanism), BirdLife International, via its World Bird Database, holds unparalleled information on the conservation status (closeness to extinction) of all but a few of the world's bird species, the threats they face, the actions needed to improve their status, the critical sites that need safeguarding, and the extent to which these sites are covered by Protected Area networks. Through Red List Indices, BirdLife also monitors global trends in extinction risk, the impact of invasive species, and changes in the conservation status of sets of species, such as birds utilised by people, and birds which provide ecosystem services, such as pollination. BirdLife's booklet provides practical examples of the use of bird data to set targets at the

national level, focus actions to meet these targets, and provide data to progress. It includes over 50 examples of focused actions from BirdLife Partners around the world to meet the Aichi Targets. These, together with hundreds of other examples can be found in State of the World's Birds and Country Profiles at www.birdlife.org/datazone/sowb. For example Aichi Target 14 (Ecosystems and essential services safeguarded): Birds themselves are important providers of ecosystem services, through their role in pollinators (at least 50 crop and medicinal plant species rely on birds), pest control (insects and rodents), and seed dispersal. Tracking trends in the status of such species can help to monitor the provision of ecosystem services. Monitoring ecosystem service delivery at Important Bird Areas can also be used to measure progress against this target. (BirdLife has developed a 'toolkit' for measuring ecosystem services at the site scale; see

<http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/sowb/sowbpubs#EStoolkit>.) Through this brochure and the wealth of data and examples available as online resources, BirdLife equips governments, businesses and others to set priorities and track success in meeting biodiversity targets.

[Get the NBSAP guide](#)