

New BirdLife video captures local perspectives

Title

All around the world, there are dedicated local people who want to conserve the nature that they depend on for survival and well-being.

Their hands get dirty planting trees; their eyes light up when they talk about nature in their communities; and they provide the local knowledge that gives insight to global decisions. And some are real characters too... So we set out to capture on film these local conservationists from within the BirdLife Partnership in our new video, entitled **Local Perspectives: action for nature and people.**

In the **video**, local conservationists from Fiji, Kenya, Iraq, Uganda, Canada, Kazakhstan, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, the Philippines and Lebanon tell us what nature means to them, show us the work they are doing on the ground, and share their views on working as part of a global Partnership. They also took the opportunity to send personal messages to the world in this video, which was premiered in front of 500 people at the BirdLife World Congress in Ottawa in June 2013.



Volunteers at tree nursery in the Philippines

BirdLife's *Local Empowerment Programme* is supporting these Local Conservation Groups, Caretakers of Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas and conservation volunteers who care for nature at the local level. BirdLife has developed the largest global network of local conservationists: over 7000 Local Conservation Groups proudly monitor and conserve their IBAs.

Ratu Tevita Masivou from Fiji considers how he is connected with nature and his obligation to protect it.

Hanington Kasasa, member of a Local Conservation Group in Uganda, says how members of the community used to kill birds but now are involved with their protection and ecotourism boat trips.

Lori Wilson, a volunteer IBA Caretaker from Canada, is a full-time nurse yet monitors the status of the birds at her IBA, is involved with educating students and linking her IBA with communities in Mexico and USA.

Footage was recorded in the field on various cameras and phones and sent in to be compiled together into a 10min film.

“There was a very strong positive reaction after the video when the audience realised the *depth* of the BirdLife Partnership. In addition to being part of the largest network of Non-Governmental Conservation Organisations in the world, viewers were now leaving the Congress hall feeling an emotional connection to the people working at sites all over the world - including marshlands in Iraq, the Kazakhstan steppe, in a wetland in Uganda; and their individual personalities and experiences there,” said *Hazell Shokellu Thompson, Director for Partnership, Capacity and Communities*.

The next step will be to share the film with BirdLife Partners all over the world. We also will ensure that the local conservationist 'filmstars' get to see themselves in the film, as part of a whole Partnership of like-minded conservationists from many different countries and cultures, united by their passion and dedication for nature.

Esteban Garrido, a volunteer IBA Caretaker from the Dominican Republic shown in video still above, firmly believes that BirdLife's relationship with grass-roots organisations and NGOs is the most effective way to move forward with conservation activities:

“I think BirdLife understands and focuses a lot on local social development for people who live close to the important areas for conservation? It is important to ensure that conservation projects support positive impacts for local people,” he says with a smile.

We thank everyone that was involved in the making of the video and hope you enjoy watching it and sharing it.

BirdLife's **Local Empowerment Programme** focuses on the individuals and organisations that work with BirdLife Partners to deliver conservation, for biodiversity and for people, at the local level.

BirdLife Partners are supporting these groups with the management, monitoring, development and defence of their local IBAs, providing an approach that is rooted in local distinctiveness, enabling traditional approaches and diversity to shape responses that are very unlikely to be achieved through externally managed interventions.