Title

Before starting a journey, you might lay a big map on a table and find that the perspective you get from this birds'-eye view makes it easier for you to plan the best route. In the same way, governments in charge of planning their actions for nature need to understand the bigger picture and all factors that might influence their decisions. Seeing this visually helps biodiversity get the space on the map it needs.

As such, a new publication launched last month – produced by UNEP-WCMC* with the collaboration of BirdLife's leading scientists and policy team – is helping governments with spatial data and mapping to make it easier for them to reach their promised targets for biodiversity. It provides valuable information so that all countries, regardless of their access to data or technical abilities, can include mapped outputs into their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). Find the new document here: *Incorporating and Utilising Spatial Data and Mapping for NBSAPs: Guidance to Support NBSAP Practitioners*.

Already, it is getting great feedback from the NBSAP Forum:

> *"It provides clear guidance on best practices for incorporating spatial data and mapping into NBSAPs – a must for the revised NBSAP process."*

Meeting targets with mapping

At the eleventh Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP11), a global partnership was set up to support countries in revising their strategies and setting national targets for biodiversity. BirdLife is a partner of this NBSAP Forum (www.nbsapforum.net), which is hosted by the Secretariat of the CBD, UNDP* and UNEP-WCMC*. The Forum web portal site is intended to serve as a 'one-stop shop' where members can access resources – books, articles, maps, best practices etc – all in aid of helping the world meet the Aichi Targets for biodiversity.

In October 2010, the world's governments, through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), agreed a set of 20 targets to help stop the loss, reduce the pressures on, and improve the state of global biodiversity. These were known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (set in Aichi, Japan). And in order to achieve them effectively, governments need to implement action plans and strategies – so this is where tools that show maps and spatial data, including the location of national parks and endangered species, make planning a lot clearer.

One such tool for viewing and analysing biodiversity information covered in this new book is the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool for Research and Conservation Planning (IBAT for R&CP). This resource is drawn together from globally recognised data sources such as BirdLife's Important Bird & Biodiversity Areas network. At the simplest level, the map tool allows users to browse the individual sites of importance for biodiversity in a country, overlaying these with protected areas to highlight potential gaps in the protected area network.

The new publication guides governments on why and how to use tools like IBAT, where to find other data and contains national examples of good practice and sources of further information.

> *"An added value in this guidance is the fact it offers various options for using spatial data, considering the countries' specific situations and availability of technical and financial capacity," said Carolina Hazin, BirdLife's Global Biodiversity Policy Coordinator.*

By helping governments in this way we are helping biodiversity get the space and attention it needs, and maintaining pressure to ensure the achievement of the Aichi biodiversity targets.

BirdLife's science and policy teams provide support to governments to ensure action for biodiversity. One such support released in 2012 shows how birds and BirdLife can help set, meet and track the Aichi Biodiversity Targets:

http://www.birdlife.org.uk/datazone/userfiles/file/sowb/pubs/NBSAP_booklet_Sep_2012.pdf

Notes: *(United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre). UNDP (United Nations Development Programme).