We go beyond

Title

The BirdLife Partnership has long recognised that work to conserve birds has positive impacts on other biodiversity, and on the human communities who depend on the natural products and ecosystem services provided by Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs).

As the world's first international conservation organisation, BirdLife also pioneered working across national, political and cultural borders to achieve conservation goals.

In 2013, BirdLife's Partners in Sierra Leone (CSSL) and Liberia (SCNL), with the support of the RSPB and VBN (BirdLife in the UK and the Netherlands), have continued saving the last great remnant of West Africa's Upper Guinea forest. Uniting the Gola National Park in Liberia with the Gola Rainforest National Park in Sierra Leone, with additional forest corridors, the proposed Transboundary Peace Park will ultimately protect over 2,000 km² of forest.

Forest communities on both sides of the border are benefitting from new employment and more secure livelihoods, and are closely involved with the demarcation and protection of the park. The BirdLife Partnership's work have established 80 community groups which aim to establish more secure and sustainable livelihoods, and end practices like bushmeat hunting and slash-and-burn farming. Forty women's groups are providing micro-loan credit for businesses such as food and household goods production.

BirdLife's German Partner NABU has been leading work to conserve the Snow Leopard in in Kyrgyzstan since the 1990s. In September 2013, a Snow Leopard was caught on one of 18 camera traps set up by NABU in the Tian Shan Mountains. The photograph was published just before all 12 Snow Leopard range states met in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, for the Global Snow Leopard Conservation Forum. NABU deserves much of the credit for inspiring and organising the forum, which resulted in global agreements, action plans and funding for Snow Leopard conservation.

As part of its "Steppe Biodiversity" project, the Ukrainian Society for the Protection of Birds (USPB; BirdLife in Ukraine) has reintroduced ten Critically endangered Saiga antelope and five Kulan (wild donkey) into the Charivna Gavan National Nature Park in 2013. These large hoofed mammals will help restore step habitat by grazing and dispersing seeds.

BirdLife Partners Nature Kenya, the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society and BirdLife South Africa recently concluded a project in 2013 which aimed to improve the livelihoods of local communities through sustainable use of biodiversity and natural resources. The project focused on six sites: Yala Swamp and Dakatcha Woodlands (Kenya), Abijata Shalla and Berga Wetlands (Ethiopia), and Wakkerstroom and Chrissiesmeer (South Africa). These sites are important for globally threatened birds like Clarke's Weaver *Ploceus golandi* and White-winged Flufftail *Sarothrura ayresi*. By the end of the project natural vegetation had regenerated, the use of natural products such as wood and papyrus was more sustainable, livelihoods

were more secure, and average local incomes had improved. Apart from its livelihoods and biodiversity benefits, the project succeeded in influencing policies at national and international levels.

BirdLife's Living on the Edge project is also changing perceptions that the Partnership cares only about birds. Living on the Edge is led by VBN (BirdLife in the Netherlands), and works with BirdLife Partners, community-based organisations, Local Conservation Groups and other agencies and institutions to reduce habitat degradation in the countries of the African Sahel, south of the Sahara. Since its inception, the project has implemented a diversity of livelihood interventions at nine sites in Burkina Faso, Mauritania and Nigeria. Among the latest achievements, new boreholes are bringing safe, fresh water to communities around two IBAs in Burkina Faso.

Communities in the buffer zones around forest reserves in central Vietnam have been benefitting from a BirdLife project in 2013 which equips them for livelihoods based on planting, harvesting and marketing valuable rattan, in exchange for conserving and managing designated areas of the forest. The project has been enthusiastically supported by both communities and local authorities, and BirdLife and Viet Nature are seeking funding to replicate the scheme elsewhere.

The Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL, BirdLife in Lebanon) has received an international award for its work at the Qolieleh marine Hima site in southern Lebanon. Under the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Dubai International Award for Best Practices is given to projects that improve the living environment. As well as protecting the coast, seabirds and other marine life, the Qolieleh Hima benefits local people by training them in sustainable fishing and other natural resource-based livelihoods, and promoting eco-tourism. Since 2004, SPNL has been reviving the traditional Hima protected area system, which recognises the importance of community involvement when preserving natural areas and managing natural resources. The Hima approach is now being used to conserve Important Bird Areas elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa, with the help of local municipalities.

The work of the BirdLife Partnership goes beyond birds, benefiting nature and people, and goes beyond today to impact the future.