



Together for birds and people



WEST AFRICA SUBREGIONAL OFFICE (WASRO)

Project Title: Supporting the growth and development of BirdLife Programmes for global flyways conservation, with a special focus on West Africa.

Region or Country: West Africa (Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Nigeria, Cameroon, Tunisia and Morocco)

Project Type: Flyway – West Africa

Date of Project Approval: 1st March 2006

Total project cost: Euros 398,000

Project Status: Ongoing

Donor: Vogelbescherming, Nederlands (VBN)

Project Description:

Overall Goal:

This project is put in place to help tackle conservation issues facing migratory birds on the world's major flyways with special focus on the Africa continent and to provide a basis for the further development of BirdLife's conservation Programme in Africa by taking account of the conservation needs of migratory birds around the world and Africa in particular.

Objectives:

- Strengthen delivery of the current BirdLife Africa Programme across the continent.
- To examine and (where appropriate) promote a conservation flyway approach into the new BirdLife Africa programme (2009- 2012) as an additional mechanism for the conservation of migratory birds on the continent.

Rationale:

Generally, there is a lot of evidence indicating that populations of long-distance migrant birds breeding in certain temperate regions and wintering in the tropics have been declining for several decades, whilst resident species and short-distance migrants have either declined at a slower rate or not at all. Thus, more conservation action might be required outside Europe to achieve and safeguard the pattern of decline in Afro-Palaearctic migrant birds. Research is also needed to assess whether the declines are caused by factors operating on the birds' wintering grounds, breeding grounds or on migration routes, and to identify ways to reverse them. This project will help tackle conservation issues facing migratory birds on the world's major flyways with special focus on the Africa continent. The target audience is the BirdLife Partners, and the purpose is to provide a basis for the further development of BirdLife's conservation programmes in Africa by taking account of the conservation needs of migratory birds around the world and Africa as a whole.

Main Activities:

- Set up and co-ordinate a "Flyway programme think tank" (including representatives from a selection of Partners, Secretariat Regional and Global staff and technical experts) to develop a global "Flyway Approach" concept for bird conservation in the BirdLife programme.
- Develop and implement a programme for "testing" the "Flyway Approach" along the Europe-Africa migration routes, specifically the East Atlantic Flyway and the Black Sea/Mediterranean Flyway.

This may include:

- Collation and analysis of information on the conservation of IBAs along the selected flyway including: i. prioritization of IBAs ii. threats
- Raising funds for sustained conservation action along the flyway
- Identifying and using opportunities for profile building, awareness, and education involving the flyway approach across Africa as a whole
- Producing/updating advocacy material on flyway conservation
- Increase flyway conservation expertise in the Africa network.



- Promote the flyway approach in the BirdLife Africa programme.
- Design and produce appropriate promotional/communication materials for the launch of the initiative at the BirdLife World Conference 2008 and advocacy/communication materials in support of the implementation of the West Africa pilot programme
- Seminar launch and event at 2008 BirdLife World Conference.

Recent Project Status:

- Small Grants of Euros 10,000 was awarded to 5 NGOs (AAO, CSSL, Naturama, GWS, and SOS Forests) to undertake actions to reduce threats on migratory bird sites in their respective countries.
- Euros 4000 (€1000 each) was also awarded to GWS, CBCS, NCF, and AAO to support awareness raising and sensitization activities planned for the 2008 World Migratory Bird Day celebrations (WMBD) - *Migratory Birds – Ambassadors For Biodiversity*.
- A project brochure which summarizes the project and will help to raise awareness on bird migration and conservation has been produced and disseminated to all partners and the development of a flyway poster is almost complete.
- Flyways campaign was launched at the BirdLife World Conference in Argentina held from 22-27 September 2008.
- Flyways logo designed with input from the Africa secretariat.

Progress

- A global workshop on the flyway approach was organized in Cambridge on March 10-11, 2007 - The workshop report has been produced and sent all focal points designated to work on this project.
- The draft global 'Flyway Approach' has been approved by BirdLife Global Council for use in Africa as part of the implementation of the project in Africa.
- A priority setting workshop was organized in December 2007 in Accra, Ghana. The workshop developed a sub-regional programme to pilot test the Global flyway concept, as an additional mechanism for bird conservation in West Africa. It was preceded by a workshop for the African-Eurasian GEF Flyways Project commonly called 'Wings Over Wetlands' (WOW) which aims to improve the conservation of migratory waterbirds in the context of the African Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA). The WOW workshop focused on filling gaps in information on important sites in the West African flyway.
- Total of 7 Small grants of Euros 10,000 each awarded to 6 NGOs in 6 countries (Cameroon, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone).
- A draft review and synthesis of scientific information on migratory birds and flyways in West Africa has been prepared.
- Flyways Initiative workshop organized at the Council for the Africa Partnership (CAP) meeting held in Nairobi 2007.
- Flyway activities imbedded in the new BirdLife Africa programme 2009-2012. .
- Production and dissemination of promotional and communication materials (brochure developed and sent to all partners whilst designing of poster is ongoing)

Lessons Learnt: The joint workshop with the WOW project enabled more countries to benefit and for information and experience exchange with a wider audience.

Challenges

Communication difficulties which hinder many countries from applying for the small grants
Insecurity at the site in Cameroon led to the cancellation of a field activity planned under the small grant programme.

Next Steps:

- Initiate discussion with partners on the way forward with the outcomes of the priority setting workshop.
- Effectively engage with the European partners in the development and implementation of the Flyways Campaign

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Contact Us

BirdLife Africa Partnership Secretariat,
West Africa Sub-regional office
c/o Ghana Wildlife Society, P.O. Box 13252, Accra, Ghana.
Tel: +233-21-665197 Mobile: +233-24-7143925
Email: birdlife-ghanawild@4u.com.gh Website: www.birdlife.org